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Indiana.

The Budget Debate.

THE debate in the House of Commons on the Indian Secretary's annual statement cannot be regarded as fruitful. Unsatisfactory in itself, the statement called forth little criticism of a nature likely to be allowed a hopeful future, except indeed such antiquated incrustations of prejudice and ignorance as are already well baked and likely to be baked still harder. The deluded optimism of the present and the past Secretaries with all its high-falutin' rhetoric was discounted, though of course it will do its mischievous work in India and at home. The well-intentioned remarks of several independent members were perhaps less helpful than they would have been if they had been based on fuller knowledge and expressed with greater caution. As it was they seemed to furnish unhappy opportunities for official optimism to ride off on irrelevancies and to create a false demonstration in its own favour. The whole performance was unreal, and suggests not a little cause for uneasiness in the minds of those who bethink themselves of the responsibilities of English statesmanship. The situation revealed by the figures of the Budget is simply deplorable. In two years, with a perilously weak treasury, the loss caused by the famine and the plague is set down at some Rx. 12,000,000 apart from some Rx. 2,000,000 of advances, supposed to be recoverable. Lord George Hamilton, indeed, boasts that "the whole of this loss has been met out of the Indian treasuries within the space of two years, and without the imposition of any additional taxation." Reviewing the accounts for 1895-96, he claims that the facts recited by him

> "show that there is in our Indian system of finance considerable elasticity, more than sufficient to meet the growth of ordinary wants";

and, on an examination of the figures for 1896-97, he finds that they

> "again exhibit the same phenomena as the preceding year—a large surplus over ordinary expenditure, endorsing the results of the preceding year, and showing there is a large margin of income over ordinary expenditure to meet the special charges to which a country like India is ever subject."

It would be an interesting experience to watch Sir James Westland's face when he reads the Secretary for India's optimistic exposition of the finances of the country, and to hear his private running commentary.

"Considerable Elasticity."

THE discovery of "considerable elasticity" in the system of finance should be particularly delightful to the Finance Minister at Calcutta. Later in the debate Sir Henry Fowler cited the Mahárájá of Darbhanga, to whose authority he paid a just tribute, as making a statement on the express assumption that the imposition of further taxes is impossible. The authority of the Mahárájá will not be strained by the assumption. It is a commonplace of financial knowledge. The misfortune is that it does not

square very comfortably with the gay assertion of "considerable elasticity." For the current year, however, Lord George Hamilton cheers the House with the announcement that "the revenue, taking the land tax, the salt tax, and various other things, is better by Rx. 2,485,300." This is an estimate in forecast. It may come right, or it may be reduced by inevitable remissions or by impossibilities of collection. In any case, if one assumes that all is recovered in due time, what does it mean? We have already set forth its full significance in these columns. It means that the authorities in their dire distress are desperately attempting to do the very thing that the Mahárájá—and everybody else—declares to be impossible. If they are not putting on taxes of a fresh description, they are squeezing to the bone the taxes already in existence, which is a branch of the impossible thing. The land tax is the staple revenue of the Government. We have already pointed out that it has long reached its rational limits, and has passed to a point of oppressive, if not intolerable, strain, and that not merely as to amount but especially as to the method of collection. We again invite the Government to give their serious attention to the significance of the grievous list of ejectments and distraints for non-payment of land tax, and particularly to the delayed answer to the allegations of Mr. Rogers in respect of the rayats of Madras. As for the salt tax, if a blush could be imagined on an official cheek, that blush might have been expected to be distinctly visible to the naked eye when Lord George Hamilton announced the expected increase from this miserable source of revenue. The "elasticity" of the salt tax is about the last thing that any statesman could mention without a feeling of intolerable shame. Besides all this, the provincial Governors have something to say in the matter. The Secretary of State expressly acknowledged in his statement that Bengal, Madras, and Bombay "complain bitterly of the check to progress" consequent upon the depletion of the local balances, and that,

"Sir Alexander Mackenzie in the Viceroy's Council last year, and Sir Arthur Havelock in his own Council this year, have vigorously protested against the proportions of the revenues assigned."

It is a very simple exercise for Lord George Hamilton to hold the scales with a semblance of impartiality between the Local and the Central Government, in the House of Commons. As a matter of course, he takes care not to touch the root of the question, but plays to the gallery with a fantastic manipulation of the fringes. That class of prestidigitation is good enough for the faithful Commons, and for the illusion of an ignorant or careless electorate. There are some of us, however, who look for serious treatment of serious problems at the hands of professed statesmen, and resent such trifling with the nation's trust in a question fraught with vital issues. The fundamental difficulty arises from the extraordinary expenditure. We make every allowance for famine, plague, exchange, external defence, and even earthquakes. But it is now patent to everybody—not official—that the essence of the mischief lies in the policy of external defence, which has been pursued so detrimentally to India during the past twenty years. With this matter we deal elsewhere in the current issue, and need only signalise the fact here. So long as the Government persists on the present "forward" lines, it is a moral certainty that there can be no internal progress, no balancing of the accounts (except by the vicious system of loans), and no contentment within the precious frontier where the taxation squeezed from the people is poured out like water on the barren rocks and sands.

Internal Development.

As regards internal development, Mr. Samuel Smith, whose benevolent interest in India is recognised on both sides of the House, had pressed upon Lord George Hamilton the need of irrigation works. Lord George replied that the area within which great irrigation works could be undertaken was becoming exhausted. But that, of course, was no answer to Mr. Smith's point that "irrigation by wells and tanks was possible over nearly all India," and that "our policy should be to encourage the peasantry by every means to do their own irrigation." The truth is, we fear, as Mr. Smith said, that powerful British interests are constantly pressing the India Office to extend railways, for which most of the material is bought in this country, but there is no pressure to extend irrigation works, for which the outlay is all in India. The pushing forward of railway building looks like energetic progress, and lends itself to political advertisement. But it is probably the case that not a single life need now be lost in time of famine for want of railway service. Railways, we have always admitted, are in the highest degree important for internal development morally and materially, and, therefore, there need to be strong reasons before one can venture to discourage further constructions. If, however, it be acknowledged, as we believe it is acknowledged by famine experts, that no more railways are needed for the sole purpose of famine, then the only other ground remaining is the strategic necessity of what is called, but wrongly called, the frontier. It may be doubted whether even that necessity is not also amply satisfied. The building of fresh railways for other internal purposes ought clearly to wait upon the rise of prosperity in the treasury, or rather in the country. It is absurd to add gratuitous harassments in a time of financial

depression. To us who have insisted through good and through evil report on the more careful development of the industries of the country, there is much satisfaction in Lord George Hamilton's avowal that

"a cardinal feature in our policy should be to multiply and vary industrial occupations, and render the ever-increasing population less dependent upon the vagaries of the rainfall of one year."

Our satisfaction will be very materially increased when we find this pious aspiration reduced to fruitful practice. To his remarks on education we must demur at several points. The Universities, he says, lead only to the Bar or to the Press. One must really have some regard for the influence of education, apart from professional outlets. The Bar and the Press, however, are not the only destinies. But, taking Lord George's own assumption, we must ask, Why is this so? Are we not stultifying ourselves by opening up educational avenues that lead nowhere, except into mischief—excessive litigation and pernicious journalism? (Though, by the way, it is not, even in the opinion of the most stupid critics, the educated journals that are pernicious.) Why not utilise all this educated ability for the purposes of the country? The public service must inevitably be opened up to the youth of the land. If not—well, then, *corruptio optimi pessima*, and we have no right to complain, except against our own short-sighted administration.

"Is it impossible," asks Lord George, "to so alter the current and tendency of the education we give as to associate it with objects of a practical and technical character, by which India's latent resources might be developed, her industries multiplied, and her productive power extended?"

It is quite possible. The current indeed is already setting in that direction, and may easily be fostered. But the men must have *la carrière ouverte aux talents*. And some Native States we wot of could give Lord George some useful hints from their own more enterprising experience.

The Seven Proposals.

IN view of the debate on the Indian Budget notice had been given of no fewer than seven motions. As the official motion submitted to the House with reference to the Accounts themselves is a mere statement of the total revenue and expenditure for a particular year, it is said that no amendment (unless it be to take exception to the actual figures) may be moved. Non-official critics, therefore, can bring pressure to bear only upon the motion to go into Committee. Upon this motion almost any conceivable subject may be discussed, but a division may be taken upon only one amendment. Even this amendment has hardly the remotest chance of success, for to negative a motion to go into Committee is to defeat the Government which is responsible for the transaction of business. The ballot, on this occasion, gave first place to Mr. Swift MacNeill, and the division upon his amendment (against which the "tellers" were, of course, the Government Whips), prevented any further division. The text of the seven motions which stood upon the paper was as follows:—

MR. MACNEILL,—To move, That this House views with grave disapproval the fact that famine, plague, and pestilence in India have been seized by the Indian Government for an attack on the freedom of the press in India, and for the revival of the system of arrest of British subjects in India under the law of *lettre de cachet*, and the indefinite imprisonment without trial of persons thus arrested; and desires to place on record its conviction that the only safe foundation for government in India is to be sought in the extension to British subjects in India of the full privileges of the British Constitution.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—To move, That, looking to the condition of the masses of the Indian people and their grievous sufferings during the present year, this House desires to express its deep sympathy in their distress, and trusts that Her Majesty's Government will institute a detailed and searching Village Enquiry into the causes which blight the industry of the cultivators and render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH,—To call attention to the great loss and suffering caused to India by plague, famine, and earthquake, and to the desirability of the Home Government endeavouring to mitigate that distress by making a grant to the Indian Government for additional relief to the sufferers; and also to the need of more effective representation of Indian opinion in the government of the country, so that greater economy may be practised in military expenditure, and more attention paid to internal reforms, especially in the direction of larger irrigation works and more extended elementary education.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE,—To move, That this House views with concern the fact that the old industries of India are fast disappearing without being replaced by new ones to any appreciable extent, with the result that its vast population has to largely depend on the imports of foreign manufactures for even the most ordinary articles of every-day use, a circumstance to which is mainly due the condition of poverty under which large sections of the people of India still labour; and that, inasmuch as the present system of education, among other causes, has had a tendency to divert the energies of the people from the preservation and development of industrial pursuits, this House is of opinion that an enquiry should be held, by such means as the Government of India consider advisable, with a view to ascertaining and suggesting measures for remedying the evils indicated.

Mr. JAMES STUART,—To call attention to the reply of the Government of India to the Despatch of the Secretary of State of the 26th day of March last, relating to the health of the Indian Army; and to move, That this House disapproves of the repeal of the Cantonment Act Amendment Act of 1895.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS,—To move, That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that in future no Indian Prince or Chief shall be deposed on the ground of maladministration or misconduct until the fact of such maladministration or misconduct shall have been established to the satisfaction of a public tribunal which shall command the confidence alike of the Government and of the Princes and Chiefs of India.

Mr. PRICE,—To move, That in the opinion of this House, the present famine has shown that there is a necessity for further means of transport in India, and that special attention should be given to the subject of irrigation and to the construction of waterways in suitable districts.

Lord George Hamilton graciously and vaguely remarked that *some* of these motions were important. But he did his best to hamper discussion upon them. Not content with relegating the Budget debate to a single day, and that the day before the prorogation of Parliament, he insisted upon making his financial statement, not in Committee, but upon the motion to go into Committee. This proceeding had two results. It telescoped up the speeches of his critics into the evening, with the result that many speeches which were meant to be delivered were not delivered. And it prevented his critics from being adequately reported in the daily newspapers. If anything were needed to complete the farce of the Budget debate in Parliament, it would be found in this shabby manœuvre.

Mr. MacNeill's Amendment.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL'S amendment was defeated by eighty votes. But it was supported in the lobby by seventeen members—Messrs. Atherley Jones, Austin, Colville, T. B. Curran, T. Curran, John Dillon, Doogan, MacAleese, M'Cartan, J. F. X. O'Brien, J. O'Connor, Shee, D. Sullivan, Tanner, Weir, Whittaker, and Sir W. Wedderburn, in addition to the tellers, Mr. MacNeill and Mr. Michael Davitt. It is hardly necessary to say that the majority against the amendment included Sir Henry Fowler, who once more indulged in the manifestly congenial game of capping optimisms with a Tory Secretary of State. For our part, while we cordially recognise the humane and sympathetic spirit which animated the speeches of Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Michael Davitt, and Mr. John Dillon, we can hardly regard the actual terms of the amendment as well chosen. To protest against attacks upon the freedom of the press, and the deportation of British subjects without trial, is one thing. To propose, in so many words, "the extension to British subjects in India of the full privileges of the British Constitution" is another thing. Mr. MacNeill's meaning might, one would think, have been at once more precisely and more happily expressed. Indeed, it is only fair to say that Mr. MacNeill, in his admirable speech, was careful to meet some of the criticisms which, as he plainly foresaw, the words of his amendment might provoke.

"He wished hon. members (he said) to have no misconception of his meaning. He wished those privileges to be gradually extended, and first, that personal liberty should be secured. He wished, in the words of Edmund Burke, that freedom should be as much the privilege of the poorest British subject in India as of the British subject in London. That personal freedom the natives of India had not. If we would govern India, not for the good of England, but for the good of India, and that would redound to the good of England, our first duty should be to extend to India justice and mercy. . . . . Having this great nation with its civilisation and religious feeling under our charge, we should do our best to show them forbearance, kindness, and consideration, giving them a reasonable, rightful measure of management of their own affairs."

Sir Charles Dilke and Lord George Hamilton had something to say by way of discounting the speeches of Mr. MacNeill and his friends. But if the grievances of India can be remedied, what matter can it possibly be whether the remedy be "general" or particular? If a general remedy is applicable, let it be applied. If a particular remedy is applicable, let it be applied. To apply the British constitution *en bloc* to a vastly dissimilar state of things would be sufficiently preposterous. The suggestion, if it were made, would need no discussion. But the position in India does demand that statesmen should make up their minds whether the British power in India is to be but another in the long line of tyrannies, or whether it is to attempt to lead the peoples to some idea and practice of self-government. Except in times of panic, we are all for the progressive idea, though recent occurrences have shown how readily we revert to the primitive type. But, assuming the normal state of expectation that the Indians will develop some governmental ideas not of the old tyrannical cast, does not one perceive that they must be led on gradually, and that the process is a long and delicate one, calling for much consideration and accommodation? Even the official reports acknowledge that the limited representative system works well, with exceptions that are surprising only in the fewness of their numbers. If the conditions are diverse—and they are—why not accommodate the practical administration to the varieties of diversity? We stand as firm as Lord George Hamilton or Sir Henry Fowler against any step that can reasonably be considered rash. What we deplore is that really good intentions should be so often marred by an official timidity which is so much the outcome of imperfect knowledge, imperfect judgment, or imperfect sympathies. The question of Indian government is steadily increasing its pressure, and it is about time that statesmanship knew its own mind.

Wanted: Village Enquiry.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN took the opportunity of pressing again for the detailed enquiry in a few typical villages which he proposed in the debate on the Address at the beginning of the Session. Lord George Hamilton would, one imagines, have had considerable difficulty in resisting this suggestion a second time, if it had been in the form of an amendment upon which a division could be taken. But Mr. MacNeill's amendment blocked the way, and no attempt was made to reply to Sir W. Wedderburn's contentions. Lord George Hamilton, it is true, said in the course of his Budget statement that some

valuable reports would be published giving details of the administration and distribution of the famine relief fund.

> "These reports (he added), and those emanating from the officials in charge of relief, will, no doubt, offer many excellent suggestions, and I have little doubt that out of the experience of the present year such an improvement will be made in the already effective famine code as will make its administration in any future famine as great an improvement upon the work of this year as this year's work was upon the administration of twenty years back."

But that, of course, is not the point. Revision of the famine code in the light of new experience is, no doubt, important enough in its way. But what is wanted above all else is rather prevention than cure. Sir W. Wedderburn asked for a village enquiry to discover the microbes which blight the prosperity of the rayat, and so to afford information which might lead to the prevention of famine. Lord George Hamilton offers precisely what Sir W. Wedderburn deprecated as inadequate by themselves, namely, "purely official enquiries in the ordinary departmental routine." The necessary reforms can hardly be expected from investigations of this kind if, as Sir William contends, "the existing official system is chiefly to blame for the rayat's difficulties." Lord George Hamilton is simply burying his head in the sand. Nor does he make matters better by labelling as "excellent" official suggestions which he has not yet seen.

Famines and their Remedy.

IN this connexion we may refer to the remarkable and admirable article contributed by Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt to the August number of the *Fortnightly Review* under the title "Famines in India and their Remedy." In this article, which had the incidental advantage of answering in advance a large part of Lord George Hamilton's Budget speech of August 5, the able Commissioner of the Orissa Division offered three suggestions for the improvement of the condition of the Indian peasantry :—

> (i) a contribution from the British Exchequer towards the military expenses of England's Asiatic Empire (miscalled India), and a reduction of the "Home Charges";
>
> (ii) a reform in the administration and the removal of certain causes which are palpably leading to the impoverishment of the cultivators;
>
> (iii) a settlement in perpetuity of the rever[illegible]rived from the soil.

It is, Mr. Dutt thinks, premature [illegible] out the hope that any remedies can wholly p[illegible]nt famines if the periodical rains fail in India. But it *is* possible to provide remedies which will lessen the force of famines when they come, and these are to be found in improvement of the material condition of the people. As to (i), the first suggestion, Mr. Dutt points out that India now pays not only for her internal administration, not only for the army and the defensive works within her own limits, but also for the maintenance of England's Empire in Asia outside the limits of India—in Burma, for example, in Beluchistan, in Afghanistan, and in Chitral. This is not as it should be. England should pay a fixed proportion of the total military expenditure which is now incurred in India and which is driving India back in despair to "taxes which every civilised country has discarded." An equitable contribution of this kind would, in Mr. Dutt's opinion, be more acceptable to India than any special grant (though, we may add, that is no reason why the special grant which has lately been talked of should not be forthcoming as well). Under suggestion (ii), Mr. Dutt remarks that hard and fast rules and regulations, framed no doubt with the most benevolent intentions, often bear hardly on the agricultural classes. Here one is reminded of two of the "microbes" to which Sir W. Wedderburn has called attention :—

> (*a*) The harsh and rigid mode of revenue collection, which drives the rayat to the money-lender ; and
>
> (*b*) The establishment of debt courts on the European model, which arm the money-lender with all the power of the empire.

But Mr. Dutt gives most of his space to suggestion (iii) which turns out to be the removal of Sir W. Wedderburn's first "microbe"—the excessive revenue demand.

> "No single act of the British Government that can be named has," Mr. Dutt says, "done so much for the prosperity and well-being of the people as the permanent settlement of the land revenue of Bengal effected by Lord Cornwallis in 1793."

And Mr. Dutt proves, from personal knowledge, and by most interesting instances, the self-reliance of the Bengal cultivators. Why not, therefore, extend the permanent settlement—as Canning would done if death had not prevented him?

> "There is no other question which so directly and vitally affects the condition of the mass of the people as this. Land is the source of living of four-fifths of the population: leave them a good margin of profits from land and they are prosperous ; sweep away all increase in the profits from land into the Imperial treasury at every settlement, and they are impoverished and helpless."

It is earnestly to be hoped that Mr. Dutt's practical suggestions, coming as they do from the ripe experience of one of the most brilliant members of the Indian Civil Service, will command the attention which they deserve at the hands of responsible authorities here and in India.

The Indian Army.

WITH Lord George Hamilton's commendation of the Indian Army nobody will be inclined to quarrel. But his comparison of the proportion of military to civil population in India with the corresponding proportion in France, Germany or even England is beside the mark. France and Germany are known to be

well-nigh exhausted by the weight of their military burdens in spite of their great wealth. England, released from similar obligations by her geographical position, is still compelled, or thought to be compelled, to maintain a large force to supply the needs of her wide empire. But in India, with her native police drilled and equipped in military fashion, the number of troops required for garrison purposes in the interior is very small, and practically the sole function of the Indian army is the so-called "defence" (which is Anglo-Indian for "extension") of the frontiers. A glance at a "large map" will show that the only frontier which need be considered is the North-West. So that the question resolves itself into one of policy merely—by which we mean Imperial policy. In a debt-burdened, impoverished country like India the standard of armaments should obviously be the minimum consistent with her needs —not any proportion existing in a wealthy country armed to the teeth either for conquest or through fear of wealthy and powerful enemies. The "forward" policy in India is not only not worth its cost in money and men, but, if it were, it ought to be a charge upon the Imperial Treas[illegible] The advocates of the policy are well aware of [illegible] But they are also aware that the moment when the cost of the forward policy comes before the House of Commons for sanction and payment by British taxpayers, the little hour of that policy will have ended. Lord George Hamilton thinks that the army in India is extremely small, and is not an element of aggression but the guardian of industry. That is not the view of the military member of the Viceroy's Council. Sir Henry Brackenbury, in his recent evidence before Lord Welby's Commission, cited by Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt in his article in the August number of the *Fortnightly Review*, said:

"In the first place, I would say that the army in India is largely in excess of the requirements for the preservation of internal order in India. The strength of the army in India is calculated to allow of a powerful field army being placed on or beyond the Indian frontier, in addition to the obligatory garrisons required for keeping order in India. The necessity for maintaining in India the powerful field army in addition to the obligatory garrisons is caused by the approach of a great military power into a position which enables her directly to threaten Afghanistan, to which we are under treaty obligations, and indirectly to threaten the security of India itself. The foreign policy of India is directed entirely from England by Her Majesty's Government, and it is part of British foreign policy generally —indeed, the object of British foreign policy as I believe it to be—to secure Great Britain's rule over her Empire. If we desired to maintain British rule in India only for India's sake, then I think it would be fair to make India pay to the uttermost farthing everything that it could be shown was due to Britain's rule over India. But I cannot but feel that England's interest—or Britain's interest—in keeping India under British rule is enormous. India affords employment to thousands of Britons, India employs millions of British capital, and Indian commerce has been of immense value to Great Britain. Therefore it seems to me that India being held by Great Britain not only for India's sake but for Great Britain's sake, the latter should pay a share of the expenditure for the purpose. And in estimating what that share should be, I think that England should behave generously to India, because, in the first place, England is a rich country, and India is a poor country."

British Apathy.

SIR CHARLES DILKE's speech on the Indian Budget was, as usual, one of the few useful contributions to the debate. The great obstacle to Indian reform is in truth

"ignorance of facts rather than any desire on the part of the people to avert their eyes from these facts. . . . . The fact that everybody had had the opportunity of reading the whole financial statement of India naturally deprived this occasion (the Budget debate) of the interest it would otherwise have."

The remedy is to make the discussion of Indian finance a real discussion, like that which takes place on the British Budget. There are comparatively few men who can feel any keen interest in a debate of which the sole issue must be rather academic expressions of approval or disapproval, followed by none of the consequences attaching to a Government victory or defeat on home affairs. Even the House of Commons can furnish only a limited number of minds having sufficient foresight to envisage the probable consequences to the empire of the present tendency of Indian administration. British constitutional history teaches us that no grievance except financial injustice ever roused the people's representatives to determined opposition. Until British electors are compelled to contribute to Imperial expenditure in India there is small hope that they will take much trouble to learn the facts or to modify through their representatives the course of Indian government. At the same time there are many members of Parliament—especially men who have imbibed the usual Anglo-Indian prejudices—who think with Colonel Sandys that:

"It is dangerous for the House of Commons to interfere much with the Government of India. The wisest thing that can be done, both for the people of India and for this country, is to leave India as much as possible to the Secretary of State, the Governo[illegible] General, and the Council."

With this [illegible]us plea for bureaucratic irresponsibility as a[illegible]l of perfection we may compare the sapienc[illegible] *Vanity Fair*, which observed on August 5:

"If India is to be in a state of tranquillity the Government have no time to waste with the Radical. Indeed, the more he protests the further we must go. *Fortunately the House of Commons will soon have closed its doors*, and Conservative good work will not suffer much Radical interruption."

The value of such remarks consists in the resentment which they provoke. There is at present, let

us not forget, no check upon Anglo-Indian bureaucracy except that which the action of public opinion, especially public opinion in England, may supply.

The Bogey of "Over-population."

The inevitable reference to increase of population in India was introduced into the Secretary of State's Budget speech to explain in part the prevalent distress. "Over-population" serves as a convenient excuse for various failures on the part of the authorities to grapple successfully with pressing social problems. But "over-population," like "over-production," is a term which requires careful explanation and limitation. Its ordinary use involves a fallacy. The fallacy implied in the popular notion of "over-production" has long ago been exploded. But "over-population" is still a fetish to which many lives are annually sacrificed. It is true, no doubt, that temporarily, and in limited areas, demand for food may exceed supply, and suffering naturally ensues. Yet economic law teaches us that food is naturally diverted towards the locality where it finds a good market. Similarly, in the event of a sudden blow to a great industry, much suffering is entailed before the necessary diversion of labour takes place. The evil in both cases is due to the lack of immediately available capital, without which the action of the economic law is impossible. India has land and labour in plenty. In normal years her productiveness is sufficient to supply the wants not merely of her present population, but of millions besides. The increase of population which intervenes between the period of distress and actual famine in no wise vitiates the argument, although it increases the difficulty of coping with famine. The pestilence which almost invariably accompanies or follows famine naturally sweeps off the weakly famine offspring first. Even if this were not so—and charitable endeavour comes in to prevent it—yet the argument from the abnormal condition would be unfair. India lacks the third requisite for the production of wealth, namely, capital. English gold has been poured into the country, to be wasted largely on unproductive purposes. On the other hand, the financial policy of the Government has resulted in a constant drain on Indian resources, and suitable outlets and conditions are wanting for the profitable employment of such native hoards as exist. Until these hoards are employed they cannot, of course, be considered capital in the economic sense. There is still room for agricultural expansion, and much more room for industrial development in India, if conditions were created favourable enough to enable Indian industries to meet the severe competition of the East. Meanwhile, to speak of "over-population" with reference to frugal, industrious workers like the Indian races is merely an attempt to transfer to the governed the responsibility for a state of things for which the Government is largely to blame. We cannot do better than add the following passage from Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt's article upon "Famines and their Remedy," which appeared in the August *Fortnightly*:—

"Much has been said of the increase of population in India. But India is not the only country in which population increases. The population of the British Islands was twenty-five millions when the Queen ascended the throne; it is now forty millions, not counting ten millions more who have found homes beyond the seas. The population of India, excluding annexations, has not increased at this rate. On the other hand, trade and commerce have increased in India, railways and canals have been opened, immense wastes have been brought under cultivation, and the resources of the country have been wonderfully developed during these sixty years. The increase of population has not been greater than the development of her resources. The increase in population affords no explanation, therefore, for the recurring famines of India. Let us have done with such generalisations, and go to the root of the matter. Let us, or those of us who can do so, mark the condition of the Indian cultivator in his home, and find out what causes impoverish him and make him unable to save. The reason is not a want of frugality, or of sobriety, or of prudence. The Indian peasant is the most sober, the most frugal, and the most prudent peasant on the face of the earth. The reason is, that at each settlement the rent payable by him is increased and his capacity to save is decreased. The reason is that, with no savings of his own, he goes to the money-lender under every pressure, and our Civil Courts, with their hard-and-fast rules, only cast him deeper into the meshes of the grasping money-lender. The reason is that in every petty dispute, civil and criminal, he is compelled to have recourse to distant and expensive law courts. The reason is that he has to pay many taxes in order to maintain England's Empire in Asia."

Proposed Grant to India.

The debate on the Budget left in suspense the timely and important proposal that a special grant from Imperial funds should be made to India to help in the alleviation of destitution. This proposal, which has been current during the past six months, and has been urged again and again in these columns, was introduced into the discussion by Mr. Samuel Smith.

"Help (he said) was needed for the suffering masses of the people of India at present. Our country was prosperous, our Colonies were prosperous. We were congratulating ourselves on the greatness of the Empire. But over our huge Indian possessions, containing the largest population, hung the greatest gloom and misery. Could we do nothing in this Jubilee year to alleviate this? He appealed to the Government and to the House to make a special grant to India in this time of awful need. . . . . What better use could we make of one or two millions than to devote such a sum to the alleviation of the misery in India? It would be the most worthy celebration of the Jubilee year. It would do more to appease discontent in India than any number of press prosecutions. Parliament would approve of it, it would be popular in this country, and he was sure it would be a wise thing to do politi-

cally. . . . . What they required was some fund which could be applied for the benefit of the peasantry after the famine was over so as to give them a fresh start. He thought that £2,000,000 could be so applied as to confer immense benefits upon India, and that it would touch the hearts of the people of that country as nothing else had done."

Sir Andrew Scoble "associated himself" with Mr. Samuel Smith's suggestion. "The famine," he said, "was not anywhere near at an end, nor was its effect, and he would like very much to see a handsome sum placed at the disposal of the Government of India by a substantial money grant." Why, one is inclined to ask, drag in the "Government" of India? What is wanted is rather a sum to be placed at the disposal of some competent body representing the people of India. It is pleasant to find that even Sir Henry Fowler spoke in favour of the proposal, which he supported with a passage, previously cited in INDIA, from an eloquent speech by the Mahárájá of Darbhanga. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom Sir H. Fowler appealed by name, sat silent, and no hint came from the Front Bench that the proposal would be adopted. If it should be refused, Lord George Hamilton and his colleagues will have added another to the long list of their blunders in dealing with India.

Poona.

WHEN the Secretary of State for India permits himself the use of language which virtually prejudges the issue of an important case still *sub judice*, it is not surprising that the average newspaper should give the question-begging heading "Sedition in India" to telegrams about the Poona prosecutions, and write of "Tilak" as if he were a convict or a deceased person of admitted eminence. Mr. Tilak is expected to be tried early in the present month for seditious writing, and until the result of the trial is known it is only decent to refrain from comment upon it. Meanwhile Professor Gokhale, who made the serious mistake of repeating on the authority of correspondents an accusation that those correspondents have not substantiated, has withdrawn the accusation and apologised for it. Sir W. Wedderburn, whose personal explanation to his constituents will be found on another page, has also apologised in the House of Commons for having "directly or indirectly aided in giving currency" to the accusation. This matter, however, should not be allowed to obscure the Poona Memorial of May 10, which we printed in our last issue. Lord George Hamilton said in his recent Budget speech:—

"The only methods by which the growth of the plague could be arrested were repugnant to the instincts, customs, and usages of the great mass of the native population, and they interfered with the privacy of their home life. . . . The Government had no choice but to do their best to stamp out the plague, and the only method by which plague can be eradicated is by the segregation of the sick and house-to-house visitation. Both these principles came into contact with the hereditary customs and traditions of Oriental life."

The Poona Memorial went a little further than this and alleged that in Poona, as distinguished from Bombay, needless violence has been done to the customs and traditions of Oriental life. That Memorial, we must point out, has not yet been disposed of. Needless to say, the telegram which Lord G. Hamilton read to the House of Commons on August 5, did not dispose of it. The telegram said that of 1,699 signatures to the Memorial, 721 had been examined, and that of these 721 only 144 could be traced. It thereupon proceeded to deal with the 144, of which 14 were denied by the persons whose signatures they professed to be. It is not difficult to conceive circumstances under which such denials might easily be made. But what of the other signatures—the 978 signatures which with 721 make up the total of 1699? In the absence of full enquiry we cannot believe that the Memorial was a mere fiction, for we have before us a series of signed statements put in by many of the signatories. The pity of it is, as we have said before, that full enquiry was not immediately made into the allegations when the Memorial was received by the Government of Bombay.

THE "FORWARD" POLICY IN PRACTICE.

I.—BY PROFESSOR A. F. MURISON, LL.D.

The rising in the Swat valley appears to have communicated, or disclosed, a feeling of unrest along the frontier as far as the Kurram Pass, involving the Mohmands, the Afridis, and the Orakzais. The danger, direct and indirect, is sufficiently obvious; but the true estimate of it in England is not likely to be assisted by the official reports from Simla, and still less by the foolish commentary of irresponsible journalism. The fact that some forty thousand troops are standing to arms, with further preparation in the background, is sufficiently eloquent. It is very silly to wire home from Bombay that "the frontier is now absolutely secure against the worst that can possibly happen." The frontier is always absolutely secure from external attacks, whensoever and whatsoever, so long at least as India itself is loyal. Any disquiet on that score is perfectly gratuitous, and the suggestion of it is mere thoughtlessness, ignorance, or excitability. The putting down of the rising, whatever its extent, is a mere question of time and men and money. The pity is, that the general ignorance of the facts of the situation gives rise to an apparent anxiety, which, although in no sense justifiable, only too readily suggests an Imperial weakness and self-distrust for which there is not an atom of foundation, but which may still encourage futile hopes that it may be an expensive business to thwart, as thwarted they must infallibly be. To misunderstand this bottom fact is the sheerest folly.

There is no lack of danger in the question of the origin of the trouble. There is no doubt whatever that many Indian Muhammadans have taken to heart the harsh treatment that they consider England has recently applied to the Sultan of Turkey—a view that is perhaps intelligible on the religious ground. But it is tolerably certain that no such feelings have prompted the rising in the Swat valley, whatever influence they may exercise in possible developments. There is far more difficulty in the question of the responsibility of the Amír of Afghanistan. The *Times*, with mischievous brusqueness and unfriendliness, concludes that there is no reasonable doubt as to his complicity. It is easy enough to attach a false importance to the coincident withdrawal of the Amír's commercial agents from Calcutta (or Simla), Bombay, and Karachi; and to interpret "commercial" in the sense it has always borne in the Central Asian diplomacy of Russia. It may, or may not, be the case that the Amír issued his orders for peace on the frontier before such action was required of him by the friendly communication from Simla; but it is well-known that the frontier tribes in question, though politically within his jurisdiction, do not in the best of times pay any more attention to his commands than happens to suit their uncertain humour. The presence of Afghans among the enemy in recent actions would be a very natural circumstance, and tells against the Amír only on positive proofs of his complicity drawn from other sources. Even the alleged fact that the Hadda Mullah, who preached a *jehad* among the tribes in the vicinity of Peshawar, stands high in the favour of the Amír, needs to be handled with much caution. The danger is, that incidental points—rumours, assumptions, inferences, or even minor facts—may divert attention from the two solid and fundamental considerations, that the Amír (1) is no fool, and (2) knows remarkably well on which side his bread is buttered.

It is not necessary to go to Constantinople or to Cabul in order to discover an adequate explanation of the Swati rising. Chitral is enough; although it may of course be only the occasion. On the wild pretext of taking precautions against Russian invasion by the Boroghil Pass, or against possible Russian intermeddling with the Chitrali tribes, we occupied Chitral, and insisted on an open road through the Swat valley. The evil vaticinations of the Liberals were officially met with the startling declaration that the local tribes were beseeching us to stay and refusing to be happy till we should definitively establish ourselves in their country. After all, the Liberal contention seems to have been the truer one. No doubt, formally, we leave the tribes in possession of their lands, we refrain from interference with their organisation or their peaceful customs, and we even recognise services in cash payments. But, notwithstanding all this, our presence there imposes irksome restraints and offends the spirit of independence in[illegible] and imbued in mountaineers. It pleases [illegible] us to speak of these populations as fana[illegible]atical this and fanatical that. But al[illegible]w, and we at once alter the adj[illegible] rather funny to speak of Sir V[illegible] of Schamyl, as a fanatic; yet we do not think it odd to apply the term, with an implied explanation of an objectionable state of facts, to the Mahdi, or Osman Digna, or the "Mad" Mullah, even though such inferior creatures be "rightly struggling to be free." The Anglo-Saxon hide, swollen firm by self-regarding superiority, is wonderfully indurated. These peoples are most naturally irritated by the very presence of strangers within their boundaries; and the English are not usually known as unaggressive or conciliatory strangers. The tribes cannot but feel that their lands and liberties are every moment in danger; they cannot be expected to understand that our word is our bond; but it costs them no effort to conceive that the strong man, who has already taken something from them, may at any moment take all the rest they possess. The very situation speaks for itself.

The question is, therefore, forced back on us: why should we go beyond our own boundaries and set up inevitable irritation among peoples that we really and earnestly want to remain at peace? It is the old question of the frontier policy. The Forward policy, which has vexed India, which has been the main danger to our Indian Empire for the last twenty years, is responsible, and solely responsible, for these troubles, and for all that may eventually develop in their train. It is undoubtedly true that, if we stay within our boundary and leave the tribes to do as they like, we shall now and again be vexed by hot-headed incursions; but that is comparatively a small affair, and each account is easily settled. This is no matter of academic speculation; it is proved by the experience of the period of "masterly inactivity" (a much misunderstood designation, by the way). On the other hand, the Forward policy has involved us, not only in constant broils, but in struggles of a considerably extensive and exceedingly costly character. The strange thing is, that this policy should carry it with such a high hand, in the teeth of its obvious consequences, when it is disowned by almost every statesman and every military authority of real importance. The fact is, that the civil powers in India are too weak to keep the active military powers in proper check; and there is no adequate electoral opinion controlling the authorities in England. The spirit of the great god Jingo is, therefore, rampant; and one day, depend upon it, we shall have to pay dearly for our slackness. The battle of these policies cannot be fought over again in the present article, but it may be at least suggestive to look back to 1874-75, and see the conditions that were in Sir Henry Rawlinson's mind, some seven years after the date of his famous "Memorandum." In considering summarily the general question preliminarily to suggesting "what should be our policy in the future," Sir Henry wrote as follows:

"Our position in India is strong and flourishing. The social condition of the people is rapidly improving. The revenue is increasing. New paths of industry are being opened up, in the advantages of which the governors and the governed equally participate. The interests, indeed, of the two classes are becoming identified. Education in the meantime is spreading—perhaps too rapidly. Crime is being repressed, and even-handed justice is everywhere advanced. Since the mutiny, insurrection has been rendered impossible, and the embers of

discontent, save in some of the native States, are hardly to be seen; not that the elements of mischief are extinct, but they are checked for the time by moral and material prosperity."

Now, we venture to ask, can it be imagined that a material alteration of these conditions would not have led to a material reconsideration of the policy Sir Henry based upon them? Just consider the points, one by one. Is our position in India to-day strong? Is it flourishing? Is the social condition of the people rapidly improving? On the contrary, is it free from elements that justly may be considered disquieting? Is the revenue really increasing? And are the methods of such increase consistent with health in the body politic? Are new paths of industry being opened up? If so, please specify them. On the contrary, are not the old industries of the country either decaying or actually destroyed by the progress of Western civilisation, and are not the new industries to engage the populations in their place still to seek? Is it true that the interests of the two classes are becoming identified? On the contrary, does not the question sound diabolically sarcastic? Education is spreading, perhaps too rapidly—is it? On the contrary, is it not the case that, having given the education, we not only refuse to utilise it, but we carefully close up the avenues for its natural utilisation, and suffer for—or at least complain bitterly of—its misdirection? Crime is certainly repressed: here at least is one solitary condition untouched, or perhaps even improved, since 1874-75. Is even-handed justice everywhere administered? Yes, again; but with the very important qualification that the methods are gravely in need of thorough revision. Is insurrection no longer possible? Well, to be accurate, the Mutiny was not exactly an insurrection, but a much milder visitation, and in fact generically distinct. But what Sir Henry possibly means is, a successful insurrection; and that is not now, perhaps, possible, although an unsuccessful insurrection is only less to be deprecated. Is it true that the embers of discontent are hardly to be seen? and are the native states the present-day exception? What of possible embers that smoulder unseen, till called into lurid glare by some chance occasion not to be forecast? Where are the vaunted checks of moral and material prosperity?

We take leave to commend such elementary considerations to the champions and supporters of this cruel and impotent Forward Policy. There is scarcely a single condition of those relied on by Sir Henry Rawlinson that can be safely trusted at the present moment; yet our governors are content to go on the exploded tradition, with the safety and prosperity of the Indian empire in their hands. It is the delusion that precedes destruction. Our sole stay in India is the moral and material prosperity of the people. The chief menace to such prosperity comes from the financial mischief, with all the hurtful elements in its operation, which penetrate throughout society. The main cause of the financial incubus is this preposterous frontier policy. Such are the links in the chain of disaster that is so laboriously forging. With India prosperous and justly treated, and therefore content, there is no human power now visible that need cause us the loss of a single hour's sleep out of concern for the frontier. The frontier tribes, the Amír, the White Tsar—not a living man of them could ever debouch on Indian territory in the face of an English army within the frontier lines. But, with India unprosperous and justly discontented, the situation is transformed. The Sibyl has already presented her books; she presents them again to-day with higher terms. To-morrow the terms will again rise, and the offer will be the last. Then—what of the day after?

II.—BY J. DACOSTA.

Recent telegrams have disclosed a state of active hostilities beyond the North-Western frontier of India, the cause of which official utterances and semi-official organs have ascribed to the preaching of fanatical priests, which has excited the Afghan tribes to rise against the English; while an examination of the incidents reported and a review of the events which have led to the present situation show those hostilities to be the result of our invasion of independent tribal territories, and of our attempts, by fortifying ourselves therein, to subjugate and include them in our Empire in pursuance of the "*scientific*" or "*advanced frontier*" policy, in the execution of which so much blood and treasure has already been expended by India since 1876.

The present troubles commenced by the public at home being startled on June 11 by a telegram saying: "Defeat of an Indian frontier force; English officers killed or wounded." The next morning the *Times* declared, upon information received from Simla, that no cause could be assigned for the tribal attack on the British force which had entered tribal territory in the Tochi Valley, in order to establish a military post in it. The writer omitted to mention that the territory had been entered by us in opposition to the manifest wishes of the tribesmen, and that we based our right to occupy it on an agreement which we had induced Abdar Rahman to make with us in consideration of our adding 600,000 rupees to the annual subsidy which he has been receiving from India ever since 1880; the tribesmen whose territory was concerned being themselves no party to the agreement, and our argument for concluding it being based on the ground that the tribesmen were not subjects of the Amír, but independent tribes governed by their elected chiefs, and paying no regular revenue to the Amír. And our agreement having provided merely that the Amír should afford no material assistance to the border tribes in their opposition to our attempts to bring them under our rule, it seems irrational under such conditions for us to claim the submission of the tribes. Three years ago, when we failed under similar circumstances to subjugate the Mahsuds in Waziristan, we sent troops to occupy the Tochi Valley, the local tribes disti[illegible]ctly manifesting their opposition to our intru[illegible]ion [illegible]d as they have since observed our determina[illegible]ify ourselves in their country, their atta[illegible]ent by us in June was to oppose t[illegible]on and subjugation of their t[illegible]

[illegible]n the present disturbances was

the night attack made by local tribes on Malakand in the Swat Valley, a place which we had forcibly occupied during our Chitral expedition, assuring the tribes by a proclamation of our Viceroy that we should not permanently occupy any part of the tribal territories which our Chitral force had to traverse in order to reach their destination. When the tribes observed that after two years we still held Malakand and were fortifying ourselves there, they could not but look upon our action as a violation of the pledge given in our proclamation, and their present attack has obviously therefore no other motive but to liberate their territory of the presence of our troops.

On July 31 when Lord Reay, referring to Lord George Hamilton's statement that the attack was due to the preaching of a priest, expressed a hope that if there were any other causes, they would be communicated to Parliament, he was told in reply that it was impossible for the Government to make a statement of the causes without enquiries, which could not be conducted whilst the fighting continued. The next day, however, a telegram stated that it had for some time been known to our political agents that a rising was intended, and that precautions were taken; and it seems incredible that Government should not then have instituted effectual enquiries into the cause of the intended attack. The reply given to Lord Reay must therefore be assumed to imply the unwillingness of the Government to afford the information asked for.

A later incident is the attack made by tribesmen from the Mohmand country on the British garrison of the fort at Shabkadr, eighteen miles north of Peshawar, and of their burning the neighbouring village of Shankargarh. A strong relief force marched from Peshawar, and the concentration of two additional reserve brigades were ordered at the same time, the requisite troops being drawn from the rest of India, even from the Madras and Bombay presidencies.

Parliament having been prorogued, before the attack from the Mohmands was reported, no question as to its cause could be asked of Government, and the British nation find themselves committed to a war fully as great, judging from the number of troops mobilised, as the Afghan war of 1878-80, while they are kept in ignorance of its cause and its motive. The situation seems unconstitutional, seeing that the supplies have been obtained from the revenues of India without the consent of Parliament, and that the Executive are waging this war without having justified it to the representatives of the British nation. It becomes a duty under these circumstances carefully to scrutinize the causes of the war and to estimate its perils, in order to ascertain how best to avert those p[illegible]s. This may perhaps be facilitated by a revie[illegible] the following facts.

The influential statesmen who [illegible] our Afghan war of 1878-80 professed to beli[illegible] the Russian advance in Central Asia involv[illegible]ace and a danger to our Indian possession[illegible] the subjugation of Afghanistan and it[illegible]y occupation alone could ward off. The [illegible]ssness of the fears expressed and the inexp[illegible] of undertaking a second invasion of Afghanistan were clearly demonstrated by officers of great ability and experience, including the great Duke of Wellington and the present Lord Roberts. But the party who schemed for the war appear to have been encouraged by the great improvements introduced in our implements of war, and of our army generally since the previous invasion, and may also have been blinded, perhaps, by the military glory which the achievement of so difficult a task as the subjugation of Afghanistan would shed on the British nation; and war was then determinately resolved upon. A *casus belli*, however, was wanting, as our relations with the Amír, Sher Ali, had been of the most friendly character, and the Viceroy was therefore directed to find a pretext to force on the Amír a British mission, in contravention to our repeated promises. Lord Northbrook, however, demurred and retired, and a more compliant Viceroy was then found, willing to fasten a quarrel on the Amír; whereupon three British armies invaded his kingdom from different directions. The hope of redeeming the disasters suffered in the war of 1839-42 doubtless encouraged our second invasion; but the hope was not realised, and the conditions on which our troops withdrew from that inhospitable land after the unsuccessful war, 1878-80, were indeed lamentable, and unworthy of a great nation. The people and Parliament of Great Britain then perceived that those who had led them into a second disastrous conflict with our neighbours were not worthy of their confidence, and the Cabinet was accordingly defeated at the general election in 1880, and had to retire. Matters then improved in India; but in 1885 the Irish claim for Home Rule led to violent political contests at home, which eventually restored to power the statesmen who had been responsible for the war of 1878-80; and they have ever since endeavoured to vindicate their condemned policy by fresh attempts to achieve the subjugation of Afghanistan. They accordingly increased H.M.'s Indian army, and modified their strategic policy by resolving on subjugating the border tribes of Afghanistan before attacking the kingdom of the Amír in order to construct military roads through their territories so as to maintain communications with any British army which should afterwards invade the kingdom of Afghanistan.

THE DEBATE ON THE INDIAN BUDGET.

I.—LORD GEORGE HAMILTON'S STATEMENT.

By H. Morgan-Browne.

It has never fallen to our lot to listen to a duller or more confused statement on Indian Finances than that with which Lord George Hamilton wearied the House of Commons on August 5 last. It may be admitted at once that circumstances were unpropitious—they nearly always are on Indian Budget night. The Indian Budget is always the herald of the close of the Session, but as a rule some sort of shamefaced apology is made for this flagrant neglect of Imperial duties. This year the business was altogether shameless. The First Lord of the Treasury made it the subject of a cynical jest—"We

shall adhere carefully to precedent" he informed a mocking House a day or two before the debate—while the Secretary of State for India brought to bear all his unrivalled powers of commonplace oratory upon a subject of which he displayed his wonted ignorance. Nothing was more obvious than that the Secretary of State in his halting exposition was repeating a half-learned lesson by the aid of imperfectly understood notes. So little was he master of his subject that on more than one occasion he mixed up millions and thousands in unconscious confusion. Nor was the element of burlesque absent from the grievous farce. That ridiculous person Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree ostentatiously took the Government of India under his protection. With the zeal of a renegade he attacked Sir William Wedderburn in such grotesque, albeit vulgar, terms that the House fairly roared at the funny little man who modelled his periods on Burke and his sentiments on a fifth-rate tub-thumper, from whose published stump-orations he had evidently drawn abundant inspiration.

To deal more particularly with the financial complications of Lord George Hamilton. The first thing to note is the growing gravity of the financial situation in India. Compared with the accounts and estimates put forward only a few weeks ago in the Government of India's Financial Statement, and the Secretary of State's explanatory memorandum, the position is changed immeasurably for the worse. Here was the position as shown in the explanatory memorandum, dated India Office, July 10, 1897:—

	Accounts, 1895-96.	Revised Estimate, 1896-1897.	Budget Estimate, 1897-98.
	Rx.	Rx.	Rx.
Net Revenue ..	62,542,085	58,034,200	59,629,700
Net Expenditure ..	61,008,087	60,021,100	62,093,700
Surplus (+) or Deficit (—) ..	+1,533,998	—1,986,900	—2,464,000

Here is the position as revealed by Lord George Hamilton in the House of Commons, August 5, 1897:—

	Accounts, 1895-96.	Revised Estimate, 1896-97.	Budget Estimate, 1897-98.
	Rx.	Rx.	Rx.
Surplus (+) or Deficit (—) ..	+1,533,998	—1,593,500	—3,924,000

This is a further deterioration of over a crore of rupees for the last two years, made up of an improvement of nearly Rx. 400,000 in the Revised Estimate for 1896-97, and a further deterioration of Rx. 1,460,000 in the Budget for the current year. Of this additional drain for the current year only Rx. 400,000 is ascribed to the famine, and no less than Rx. 730,000—exactly one-half—is the estimated cost of the Tochi and Malakand military operations. Of course, Lord George Hamilton was not unduly depressed—your Indian official is a veritable Mark Tapley, except when a falling exchange offers him a convenient cloak for official extravagance. What did he say, then? Why, he appealed to exchange forthwith. "Against this may be put a rise in exchange," were his sapient words. Let us pause for a moment to contemplate so much simplicity. Chitral cost $1\frac{3}{4}$ millions. It was paid for by a rise in exchange. The Government's breach of faith has already cost another three-quarters of a million. No matter; it will be paid for by a rise in exchange. Just so. When exchange falls, the Government excuse deficits as due to forces beyond their control. But when exchange rises, are they going to squander their good fortune in wiping out deficits, or in contributing to a calamity like the famine? Not they. It comes in handy to pay for military promenades on the frontier.

In this connexion we may recall the wise words of that eminent statesman—Sir Lepel Griffin—whom a few of his admirers have been assiduously puffing in the press as the desirable Viceroy at the next vacancy. Sir Lepel informed the inevitable interviewer that these little frontier expeditions were such good training for our troops, that really it might become necessary to provoke them if the frontier tribes would not oblige. How admirably this kind of statesmanship would fit in with Lord George Hamilton's notions on finance. Let us see how it might work out in practice.

Telegram from Viceroy.—Troops getting stale. Want exercise. Shall we raise the border?

Telegram from Secretary of State.—You must ask Westland about Exchange. What is it worth on this Budget?

Telegram from Viceroy.—Exchange better by one crore.

Telegram from Secretary of State.—All right. Fire away. But don't exceed one crore.

But the thing grows too serious. This three-quarters of a million was the estimate a month ago. With the whole border aflame and the hasty mobilisation of 30,000 or 40,000 men where is that estimate now? We feel confident that the recent development of events on the North-West Frontier will be found to have already added another crore to the latest estimate. Consequently by this time the original deficit of two-and-a-half millions for the current year may be now estimated at something like double that amount, or five millions. Where is this kind of thing going to end?

The other point in Lord George Hamilton's statement which calls for comment, is his contention that the famine and plague will have cost Rx. 12,000,000 in the two years 1896-7—1897-8. As the expenditure on account of the plague is not shown separately, we may take it that it is not of itself of a budget-destroying character. Practically, Lord George Hamilton means that the Famine will have cost Rx. 12,000,000 for the two years, and that this being so it is a remarkable tribute to the economy of the Indian Government and the elasticity of revenues that in those t[illegible]rs, there should be only accumulated deficit o[illegible] Rx. 4,500,000 without the imposition of fr[illegible]ation—or taking the figures in his Budget [illegible]nt, an accumulated deficit of Rx. 5,500,00[illegible] how does he make out that the famine is co[illegible]x. 12,000,000? At page 5 of the Secret[illegible]tate's memorandum, there is a table show[illegible] increased charge for famine in 1896-7 as c[illegible] with the original Budget estimate for th[illegible] That table shows a net increased charg[illegible]ine in 1896-7 of Rx. 5,024,100 on imperial acc[illegible]d of Rx. 574,700 on provincial

account. At page 6 of the same publication there is a similar statement for 1897-8, showing a total deterioration attributable to famine of Rx 4,176,300. From these statements it would appear that the cost to the Imperial Government—which alone affects the Imperial surplus or deficit—is Rx. 9,200,000 instead of Rx. 12,000,000. But the details of this estimate are not very clear although the total of nine crores may be fairly correct. In the first place it seems to be made up by treating every falling off in revenue *as compared with a Budget estimate* (now Budget estimates are notoriously untrustworthy—Finance ministers themselves say so, and they ought to know) as a loss caused by the famine. But increases of revenue are not treated as a set off to such deterioration. In the next place, taking the year 1896-7, there is an increase of net expenditure in Railways of Rx. 1,234,200 claimed to be due to famine and a *reduction of net expenditure on railways* of Rx. 197,200, which is not treated as a set-off. How can there be both an *increase* and a *reduction* of *net* expenditure? What kind of financial juggling is this? It is impossible, therefore, to feel confidence in this particular estimate.

There remains the question, what is the probable loss to the Government of India caused by the famine? We can best arrive at this by comparing the estimates for 1896-7 and 1897-8 with the accounts of 1895-96. In this way we start from a solid basis of realised fact and not from the errors and uncertainties of an estimate. Decrease of revenue under certain heads and certain increases of expenditure may be fairly attributed to the famine But because an estimate of increase of revenue, perhaps extravagant, has not been fully realised, it is ridiculous to cry "Famine." For instance, a loss of Rx. 50,000 in net Forest revenue is put down to the famine, although there was an actual increase of over Rx. 100,000 in net Forest revenue for 1896-7 (Revised Estimate) as compared with the Accounts of 1895-96. Taking 1895-6 (Accounts) as our basis, the following may perhaps be fairly claimed as the cost of the famine.

NET COST OF FAMINE.

IN 1896–7.	Rx.
Loss of Land Revenue	2,505,500
,, Salt	423,200
,, Excise	116,500
,, Provincial Rates	164,800
Total loss of Revenue	3,210,000
Increase of Famine Relief	1,426,000
Loss of Receipts on Railways ..	1,700,000
Saving on cost of Irrigation ..	– 626,000
Total increase of Expenditure	2,500,000
Cost of Famine for 1896-7 ..	Rx 5,710,000
IN 1897–98.	Rx.
Loss of Land Revenue	549,000
,, Salt	127,000
,, Excise	46,000
,, Provincial Rates	80,000
Total loss of Revenue	802,000
Increase of Famine Relief	3,080,000
Loss of Receipt on Railways ..	1,175,000
Saving on cost of Irrigation ..	– 680,000
Total Increase of Expenditure	3,575,000
Cost of Famine for 1897-8 ..	Rx. 4,377,000
Net cost of Famine for the two years	Rx. 10,087,000
Deduct portion borne by Provincial Governments, say ..	1,087,000
	Rx. 9,000,000

Seeing that this estimate would show a total loss of railway receipts in the two years of nearly Rx. 3,000,000 against a little over Rx 2,000,000 estimated by the Government of India it is certainly not an understatement of the probable cost of the famine. Yet it is in substantial agreement as to the total with the estimate at pages 5 and 6 of the explanatory Memorandum, and like it is some Rx. 3,000,000 short of the amount stated by the Secretary of State in his Budget speech to be the cost of the famine. This estimate also attributes every rupee of deterioration under certain heads of revenue to the Famine. Where then does that Rx. 12,000,000 come from? On the whole we see no ground to suppose that nine crores is not a sufficiently liberal estimate of the cost of the famine to the Imperial Government.

Of course this nine crores is a heavy burden; but in the first place we must remember that by the Famine Insurance Fund the Government had been preparing for just such an emergency, and in the second place that during the last three years a rising Exchange has been bountifully adding to its resources. Compared with 1894-5, only two years ago, Exchange is costing less by Rx. 3,000,000 in each of the years 1896-7 and 1897-8. Consequently towards this burden of the Famine Exchange contributes no less than two-thirds of the cost; leaving only Rs. 3,000,000 in two years as the cost of calamities unredeemed by counterbalancing good fortune. And yet instead of three crores the deficits for the two years threaten to amount to five and a-half crores. And still the Government of India boasts that the deficits are not greater than they are!

II.—BY W. M. J. WILLIAMS.

Sir H. Fowler is the despair of his friends when he turns his official side to them as he did again on August 5. With half-averted glance, he speaks on Indian affairs in the tottering accents of bureaucracy. No one can well forget that this is the "year of calamity" in India. But one trusts there are many whose political ears will perceive the discord between the pæan of the ex-Secretary and the gloomy and jarring financial statement of the Secretary for India. Sir H. Fowler spoke (in equivocal phrase) of the story of British administration in India as the "most wondrous in history." Lord George Hamilton spoke of India in the year of the Diamond Jubilee as stricken with famine, plague and earthquake; with finances in dire straits, becom-

ing worse since the estimate for the current year was made; taxed so that at the approach of recurring famine nothing was left but to remit taxes, pay current expenses from loans, and those loans in turn increasingly drawn, not from India, but from London. Sir H. Fowler counts the achievements, and they are many of a kind; but they do not include a satisfactory moral or material condition of the people, though battles have been won and territory enlarged. Lord George Hamilton stands, not statuesquely, yet as lifeless as a statue almost, with his eyes to dark and heavy clouds, and he mumbles of problems—finishes his dismal story with problems, whether the clouds all round will break in cruel storms or pass away, leaving a time of light and hope. The last words were, the clouds! the clouds! And, looking at the present position, the economic, the sanitary position, the ruin by "acts of God," and now the intelligibly mystic outbursts of the tribes in the far North-West, who will doubt that the uninspiring Secretary of State was the more faithful artist, however sombre his picture?

Sir H. Fowler found the Budget debate in the Commons "lively," with an oblique reference probably to some of the suggestions made during the evening. He complimented all and sundry, the Secretary of State, the Viceroy, and all who rule in India for the way in which they have faced the difficulties of the day, and in so doing he undoubtedly expressed what the severest critics would gladly say on fitting occasion. To dot Lord George's i's and cross his t's is nevertheless, to many, a very unsatisfactory thing—too optimistic on the face of Lord George's own statement, which was in tone and substance an *apologia*. In adducing some chief points, one is at the outset tempted to touch upon the evidence given of the stagey presentation of affairs by the remarks on the provincial settlements and the perennial struggle for funds between the local and the central authorities in India. Lord George Hamilton can see the necessity of checking local expenditure *in India* by local financial responsibility, while stoically encouraging at home the growth of subventions from the central coffer. This was but one of the many signs of the priming he had endured before appearing as an exponent of finance. But other parts of the statement do not contain such unexceptionable financial principles. The *apologia* was curiously involved. One can sympathise with disappointment over the disappearance of the "realised surpluses" which the Finance Minister had planned in succession, but which were washed away into a grand wreck by "meteorological phenomena." Are there not evidences also that surpluses may not, shall not, flourish in India? Take the Secretary's remark in his brief *résumé* of the 1895-6 Accounts that they show a surplus of Rx. 1,533,000, *though they contain the whole cost of the Chitral campaign*. The suggestion is inevitable that when famine and plague do not require the money, then a campaign on some distant border will somehow appear in time to check too vigorous a development of surpluses and a consequent policy of reduction of taxation or payment of debt. A case in point, too, is the remark on the 1897-8 Estimates, where Lord George's brief required the mention of the virtuous reduction of Rx. 100,000 on Army Expenditure. Before the words were spoken in Parliament they required emendation with reference to the cost of the "expeditionary forces in the Tochi Valley and Malakand." One marks the financial ill-luck that dogs the footsteps of the Administration. That ill-luck is not wholly accidental—is not free from considerations which point to the Government's responsibility. Lord George, speaking of the triennial period 1895-6 and 1897-8, uses the phrase "extraordinary expenditure thrust upon us," and it is a good specimen of the studied assumption of innocent policy. The innocence is partly justifiable, as referring to the financial issues of famine and plague. But expenditure in the main is dependent on policy, and it will not do to class all the Chitrals, the Tochis, and the Malakands and such enterprises, with the crores involved for them, as visitations for which the policy of the Government is in no wise responsible. The cake has been eaten, and the cost of it has to be paid—by instalments. To speak of "deficits very much less than the extraordinary expenditure thrust upon us" may be a triumph of cameral wisdom and diplomacy. But it is poor cover for an extravagant policy, and for finance which trusts to benefits from an improved exchange—all swallowed up as it appears, and all insufficient without heavy borrowing. Then, again, couple here the fact, so lightly dropped out of the box of puzzles, that at the last moment the Rx.4,000,000 proposed to be raised in 1897-8 in India at 3 per cent., and £4,500,000 in London, had to be modified into *three* crores in India at 3½ per cent., and the balance of the, say, £8,000,000 in London at the market rate. India cannot lend any more even though 3½ is offered for it. Then, of course, it was inevitable that the famine fund of railway lines should be thrown into the balance, and there can be no doubt that the railway system has been of great assistance in combating the wide-spreading arms of famine and death. But they only enable us also to travel more speedily to the bottom of the question of India's economic condition. The insurance does not insure from dire suffering. When the famine comes, and we are informed that it is unavoidable, there is nothing upon which to fall back. Officialism had to confess reluctantly that English charity was needed to combat the foe, and now, again, the Indian Secretary informs the House of Commons, that "the sources of taxation in India are few and cannot be increased." In other words, in taxing the people to provide the defence required, we leave the people, when famine comes, only a gasping existence. Sir H. Fowler speaks of borrowing £6,000,000 on the market without being one whit the worse financially, because of the famine fund expenditure, a statement which, when compared with Lord G. Hamilton's admission that Indian taxation cannot be increased, requires revision of a drastic kind. All the loans, of course, must come from the produce of the country, reproductive works and all, and the ability to pay taxes is an index of prosperity. Here, however, one has the "authoritative statement" that the last penny is already levied. And one can believe it when one finds that the famine and the plague have already

cost the Government Treasury fully Rx. 12,000,000 without mentioning the Rx. 2,000,000 of advances, which are only believed to be recoverable, nor counting the inevitable general items and the extras still to be taken into account. The crowds of people earning usually 1½d. and 2d. a day are visited with plague and famine, an area of 322,000 square miles becomes a thirsty waste, a population of 68,000,000 suffers, of which 4,224,000 have to be relieved so that the breath may be kept in them, and there is no wonder that the limit of the taxable capacity of such a people has been reached. Lord George suited the task of telling the miserable story, and his attitude, however unattractive, deserves greater attention than the courageous pose of Sir H. Fowler.

The view here taken of the financial condition of India is demonstrable from Lord George Hamilton's "authoritative statement." What of the prospect, therefore? Deficits are now steadily recurring. Rx. 2,464,000 on the three years ending 1897-8 is brought out without any disclosure of the state of the debt. But even this poor display is dependent upon the *estimate* for 1897-8 which itself shows a deficit of Rx. 2,464,000, Lord George persisting throughout in regarding such estimates as though they were closed accounts, whereas the strongest probability exists that they are inadequate for the situation. The Secretary of State says that "the famine has entirely upset the Budget calculations" for 1896-7, a fact of the most obvious kind. But are there not signs which point to the upsetting of the 1897-8 Budget? And, however satisfactory the late rains, the signs surely are not such as to point to the disappearance of the estimated deficit, but rather to a deficit larger than the estimate. Yet, in face of this, what steps are proposed to meet the situation? When a people are taxed to the limit of endurance, on the admission of an "authoritative statement," some review of the position with the object of curbing outgoings might be expected. The Budget speech may be examined in vain for any indication of an economical tendency in expenditure. Everything seemingly is to be maintained at present cost, and loans are to be resorted to which cannot be raised in India nor (though Sir H. Fowler demurs) be so cheerfully subscribed in London as he supposed. Indeed, *is* all to be maintained as before? Referring to the army, Lord George Hamilton made some extraordinary remarks respecting the proportion of men to population in India compared with our Continental standard. Such a comparison must have had some meaning, and can, indeed, only mean that he would, if he could, increase the *personnel* of the Indian army. That hint makes it necessary to remind ourselves that in 1884-85 the net expenditure on the army was Rx. 16,251,000, and the estimate for 1897-8 is Rx. 24,514,000, an increase of 50 per cent. in fourteen years. Remembering the financial position, the economic condition of large sections of the community, we submit there is grave reason for censure of the attitude of the Indian Government and the Secretary of State. Is it too much to say that the attitude is too exclusively military? Defence is spoken of as from military power only, and the people's discontent and suffering and poverty are overlooked, or, at any rate, the defensive value of a thriving population is too much neglected. Nor can this be surprising if all the rulers of India share Lord George's sentiments. He refers incidentally to the fall in the opium revenue and quite unnecessarily reminds Parliament that he had no "objections from a moral point of view to the Indian Government deriving a certain portion of its revenue from opium." From that to the next paragraph on the army, with its ethical postulate of force as the only guarantee of security, is an easy transition. However wretched the condition of many millions of the people may be, the authorities have the support of Lord George Hamilton in a policy which will spend on swords to guard a people dying of famine and plague.

The administration is unquestionably entitled to credit for much heroic and much successful work done in combating the threefold calamity from which India is now suffering and nothing in these remarks should be deemed to overlook, still less intentionally minimise, such service. But, while cheerfully recognising that, one must repeat that the financial and economic condition of India to-day is a matter for grave disquietude, and seems moreover to be due directly to a policy the outline of which is that the Government directs its eyes to the Afghanistan and other borderlands, to the comparative neglect of the development of the interior, whence the sustenance of the people arises. In pursuit of this policy now for a long series of years the finances have been brought again to a critical state—a state in which taxation is at the maximum, Government being upheld in part by loans, with anything but a bright prospect of improvement.

AGRICULTURAL BANKS IN MYSORE.

FROM THE "TIMES."

The praise lately awarded to the Mysore Administration in Parliament was well deserved. Since its rendition to its native dynasty in 1881 this principality, with its population of 4½ millions, has won a leading place for good government among the Feudatory States. During exactly half a century it had been under British rule, and from 1861 it was practically in the hands of British district officers, British divisional commissioners, and a British Chief Commissioner at their head. If it were possible so to ingrain the British system into Indian administration that it should endure after British supervision was withdrawn, the experiment had been made in Mysore. The result proves that it is possible to do so. Under an accomplished prince, whose death has been one of India's great losses during the closing decade of the century, Mysore more than realised all that was hoped for. The Máháràja was assisted by a Prime Minister of rare ability and possessed of that faculty for securing continuous effect to his views, which is one of the highest attributes of statesmanship. Sir Sheshadri Iyer has shown that progress in the native State need not be interrupted by the death of its ruler, however valuable the personal qualities of the ruler may have been. Under the regency Mysore not only maintains its reputation for enlightened government, but it is bringing to maturity the good seed which its late Prince sowed. Alone among the Indian principalities, Mysore has been able to establish an institution which, in some respects and under proper safeguards, contains the germs of a representative assembly. The annual address delivered by the Prime Minister to that assembly is recognised to be an important utterance of the Indian year. As we pointed out last December, Sir Sheshadri Iyer's account of his stewardship is one of increasing revenue, reduced taxation,

and a large expansion of cultivation and of industrial enterprise. The result is due in part to the fact that Mysore rests secure from attack under the ægis of the British power. It is also due in part to gold discoveries within the State, and to the rapid extension of mining and coffee planting conducted by British capital. But after all such considerations have been allowed for, the prosperity of Mysore is largely owing to the firm, wise, and long-continued direction of its affairs by a Prime Minister who enjoys the confidence alike of the British Government and of the Queen Regent and the people.

In no part of India is there a stronger feeling of attachment to the British Crown. For in no part of India has modern education been carried so far, with so little relaxation of the traditional reverence of the Hindus to a personal Sovereign. The account of the magnificent Jubilee celebrations in Mysore, brought by recent mails, comes with almost a sense of relief after the disturbing events by which that national festival was marred in other parts of India.

The prospects of the present season, which have been brightened by more favourable conditions in the British provinces, still cause grave anxiety in Mysore. The south-west monsoon had, up to the end of July, brought but a scanty rainfall. Unless a more copious supply has been received during the past three weeks, Mysore may have again to fight with scarcity, perhaps deepening into famine. It has shown more than once, and conspicuously in 1892, that it is prepared for the battle. But in Mysore, as elsewhere, the old theory that several bad seasons are required to make a famine no longer holds strictly true. There, as everywhere throughout India, the people are less patient of suffering than in bygone generations; for they have been trained to expect that the Government shall come to their relief with a promptitude and on a scale never before dreamed of. The staying-power of the people is, perhaps, not diminished so far as regards their material condition, but it has decreased in respect to their willingness to suffer. How to redress the balance by augmenting their material resources in proportion as their powers of endurance lessen is the initial problem of famine in Mysore, as in British India.

That problem Sir Sheshadri Iyer is endeavouring to solve by a plan of his own. There can be no doubt that agricultural banks would go far to bring out the whole resources of the cultivators, and to raise a breakwater between scarcity and the need of Government relief. The method adopted in British India is for the Government itself to advance money to the husbandmen and peasant proprietors for digging wells and other useful works. Under this system of *takkavi* advances the Government is itself the creditor, and realises its loans by a process similar to that used for the recovery of the land revenue. The system is an old one, but the objection to it is of equally long standing—namely, that the Government cannot turn petty banker on a scale sufficient to meet the requirements of 200 millions of peasants. Nor have the proposals for agricultural banks put forward in British India been able to overcome a fundamental difficulty. Without special facilities given by Government to such banks for recovering their loans, the capital is not forthcoming. But the very act of granting such special facilities tends to saddle the Government with the odium of enforcing private debts to the banks by the stringent machinery reserved for the public revenue, and to place other creditors of the peasants *pro tanto* at a disadvantage. The Mysore scheme endeavours to obviate these objections by the Raiffeisen system, under which the local community itself supplies the capital and enforces payment.

The scheme was set forth in great detail in the Mysore Government Gazette at the end of 1895. Within six months 30 rural banks of the kind had been formed, or were in course of formation in the State. The regulations provide that every such bank is to be an association of landholders or peasant tenureholders on co-operative principles, not for the purpose of earning a profit divisible among its members, but for the purpose of obtaining money by their united credit, and of lending it among themselves according to the actual requirements of each member and to the extent to which the other members have confidence in him. The funds of the bank are to be raised by receiving deposits from the members, or by loans from outsiders. The security for these loans or deposits is the joint security of the association which forms the bank. The security to the bank for the repayment of a loan to one of its members is the joint security of the borrower and of two sureties who should also be members. No loan may be made to any one who is not a member. The scheme gives to the depositor the security of an association of responsible tenureholders instead of the security of the individual borrower. Its local knowledge enables it to admit as members only men of approved honesty and thrift. The bank thus secures a carefully-selected class of borrowers, and it lends only for agricultural operations which will repay the outlay. Such operations include the redemption of land from mortgage, the purchase of stock, the extension of individual holdings on the security of the entire tenure, and, generally, small agricultural improvements likely to yield a good return. Every borrower is bound to expend what he borrows on the express object for which the loan is made. Any failure to do this is punished by the recall of the loan at three months' notice. Loans for the ordinary annual requirements of cultivation must be repaid within the year. Loans for more permanent works are repaid by annual instalments, and the amount of any such loan is not to exceed the ascertained margin of profits from which the annual instalments shall be repaid. The interest charged by the bank is to be sufficient only for the payment of the interest on its deposits, with a small margin for the actual expenses of management and the gradual formation of a reserve fund. The reserve fund is not to be divided among the members, but is to be kept as an additional security for depositors, or as a loan fund to be used under the same safeguards as are applied to the lending of deposits.

Mysore has thus been able to establish a number of small rural banks, without share capital, paying no dividends, and each operating in a limited area with a perfect knowledge of the character, requirements, and solvency of its customers. A rural community in which such a bank is established obtains the advances required for remunerative agricultural works on the joint security of the men of ascertained substance within it. But it is only the thrifty and solvent members of the community who can hope to become borrowers. Nor can even the thrifty and the solvent get loans except for definite works to be carried out under the eye of the lenders. Loans for wedding ceremonies and other extravagant festivals —at once the profit and the ruin of the village money-lender in India—cannot be obtained from these banks. Exceptional cases of *bonâ fide* domestic requirements are provided for, but they are strictly scrutinised, and the security for the repayment must be ample. The scheme supplies an automatic check on the misapplication of the funds. The members of the bank, who are responsible for the repayment of the deposits, are always on the spot, and the use to which one of their neighbours actually puts a loan admits of no concealment. A general committee of the members watches for any diversion of loans from the objects for which they were borrowed. A smaller executive committee, not exceeding five, conducts the actual business of lending, and meets regularly to examine into the expediency of granting each separate loan. The members of these committees receive no remuneration for their services other than the esteem that attends the discharge of a useful public duty and the respect which Indian villagers accord to neighbours from whom money can be borrowed at low interest. A million rupees found their way to the cultivators under this system in the Mysore State within a few months, and so complete were the local knowledge and supervision that scarcely a bad debt resulted. It is too early, however, to judge of the scheme if carried out on a scale commensurate with the requirements of the whole rural population. At present it still remains an experiment in co-operative self-help, but an experiment which is being watched with interest by our officers in the British provinces and to which all must wish success.

We are just now passing through a small Indian crisis, in which the Indian Secretary blames the vernacular Press for its seditious language about plague regulations in Poona. What are the facts? These journals have been pointing out cases in which undue violence has been offered to religious and domestic prejudices; they have been supporting the attempts to restrict the plague, if put into force with care and discrimination; and they have been warning the Government that trouble would happen if severe measures were thoughtlessly carried out. Trouble has arisen, and it is all, or most of it, put down to the Vernacular Press.—[illegible] *aily Press.*

NOTICES.

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INDIA.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1897.

THE FRUITS OF THE "FORWARD" POLICY.

THE criminal folly of the "forward" frontier policy at last stands revealed to every man, woman or child who is able to read. Warnings and expostulations without number have been thrown away upon the military clique who control the Government of India, and every edition of every British newspaper now shows the penalty which is being paid for headlong obstinacy. The latest news as we go to press tells us that the Afridis are "up"—the Afridis from whom Lord Roberts assured an interviewer on August 20 that no serious difficulty was to be anticipated—Fort Maude has been captured, and the inhospitable regions lying beyond the North-West frontier of British India are ablaze. The series of disasters which the Government of India has recklessly brought not so much upon itself as upon the luckless taxpayers, its subjects—*quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi*—began on June 10 with the attack in the Tochi Valley. Next came the "rising" in the Swat Valley, which was reported on July 27; then the Shakbadar incident, reported on August 8; and finally the sequence of events in the parts about Peshawar which began on August 15 and will end nobody knows when. In the long run, no doubt, a precarious peace will be secured by the brave and well-equipped army which is at the disposal of Anglo-Indian militarism, but one shudders to think of the cost in blood and treasure at which the consequences of a fatuous policy will be, not redeemed, but momentarily hidden once more from public observation. A certain melancholy interest attaches to the efforts which are now being made to foist upon the public any explanation but the obviously right one for the series of outbreaks. One party, represented at its best, which is also its worst, by an old-fashioned Tory like Mr. Frederick Greenwood, finds the desired cause in Lord Salisbury's weakness and vacillation in dealing with the Great Assassin. Another party, represented by Lord Roberts and the Simla clique, assures us that all the trouble is due to "fanaticism." Both parties insinuate that the Amír of Afghanistan, in spite of his assurances to the contrary and his firman, is largely responsible. In fact, anything and anybody are to blame except the "forward" policy and its supporters. The manifest truth is, of course, that the so-called border tribes—the tribes, that is, beyond our border—desire simply to be let alone. They find their independence, which they value more than their lives, threatened by the unceasing aggression of the Government of India. Their alarm is well founded. On March 14, 1895, when the Government of India was about to despatch an expedition for the relief of Dr. Robertson and his force in Chitral, the Governor-General in Council issued the following proclamation to the tribes beyond the Peshawar frontier:—

> "The sole object of the Government of India is to put an end to the present, and prevent any future aggression in Chitral territory, and as soon as this object has been attained the force will be withdrawn. The Government of India have no intention of permanently occupying any territory through which Umra Khan's misconduct may now force them to pass, or of interfering with the independence of the tribes; and they will scrupulously avoid any acts of hostility towards the tribesmen so long as they on their part refrain from attacking or impeding in any way the march of the troops."

That was the bargain, and the Government of India, aided and abetted by Lord George Hamilton and his colleagues in the present Cabinet, broke it. No sooner had the object of the relief expedition been attained than the Government of India cynically suggested steps involving flat disregard of the proclamation. The suggestion was declined (and, as Lord Rosebery announced, declined unanimously) by the late Liberal Government. But unfortunately before the Government of India had acted upon the order, a defeat of the Home Government placed Lord Salisbury in power. One of the first acts of the new ministry was to reverse their predecessors' order in regard to Chitral—in other words, to direct a flagrant breach of faith. Mr. Balfour, it will be remembered, took the opportunity of observing that where a British soldier had set his foot, there he must remain. That doctrine, of course, was precisely what the tribes beyond the border had feared, and their present conduct is not only such as was to be expected, but such as was actually predicted at the time by competent judges.

There is no need to review here the "forward" frontier policy as a whole. Readers of INDIA are aware that no subject has been more consistently prominent in this journal since its first publication in 1890. Moreover, as it happens most fortunately

that there is in this matter a clear difference between the Liberal and the Tory Front Benches, Liberal newspapers in the United Kingdom are for once strongly on the side of reason and justice in India. There are, however, one or two points to which we may well direct attention. In the first place, one cannot help contrasting with the actual course of events the optimistic statements made by Lord George Hamilton in his reply to Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the address on February 17, 1896. In defiance of Lord Elgin's proclamation Chitral had then been occupied, a road had been constructed between Chitral and Peshawar, and fortified posts had been planted in the territory of tribesmen whose independence had been guaranteed. Here is Lord George Hamilton's account of what had taken place, and of what might be expected:

> "The most sanguine anticipations that anyone could have indulged in had been more than realised. (Hear, hear.) So far from their occupation being regarded in a hostile spirit by the people of the country, on the contrary, they welcomed the English occupation, because it had inaugurated a period of security which they had not known before. (Hear, hear.) .... The Government had succeeded in making an excellent road from Peshawar to Chitral, and the tribes through whose territory it had passed had of their own accord undertaken to protect it. The result was that commerce had largely increased. The number of animals and caravans passing through that country had immensely increased, and, moreover, the country was by no means so poor as was supposed. On the contrary, it was evident that many hundreds of years ago it was much more thickly populated than it was now, and there were many signs of returning prosperity. It was, therefore, in the interest both of the intervening tribes as well as of the Chitralis that the policy this House maintained last year should in no sense be disturbed. (Hear, hear). .... There had been a difference between the Indian Government and the tribes as regarded the Proclamation, but only in one sense. The heads of the tribes petitioned the Political Officer asking to be incorporated in British territory. (Laughter and cheers.) They said they had felt such advantage and sense of security from the presence of the troops, and no doubt from the better prices they got for their produce, that they thought they would like to have these benefits permanently. They were told it was impossible they could be so incorporated."

And at the close of a speech which was loudly applauded by the Tory wiseacres below the gangway Lord George Hamilton added:—

> "Before sitting down he congratulated his friends behind him that the first time they had to give a party vote last year they were actuated by true political instincts when, by an overwhelming majority, they assented to this forward movement. He believed there had been no forward movement in recent years made by any Government which had been more beneficial to all concerned, and which would tend to put an end to those periodical disturbances and outbreaks of fanaticism and terrorism which had characterised that portion of her Majesty's dominions. (Cheers.)"

Well, we see now what Lord George Hamilton's almost lyrical outburst was worth. We have before our eyes the spectacle of that "period of security "which they had not known before." We are able to appreciate at its right value the termination of "those periodical disturbances and outbreaks of "fanaticism and terrorism which had characterised "that portion of her Majesty's dominions." Lord G. Hamilton was highly indignant at the suggestion that there had been a breach of faith. As to that, if any test be needed, there is a simple one. What would have happened if the proclamation, instead of stating what it did, had stated, in Mr. Balfour's words, that where a British soldier sets his foot, there he must remain? Would the tribesmen then have refrained "from attacking or impeding in any "way" the march of the expedition? There are some questions which answer themselves. There is a remarkable contrast not only between the course of events and Lord G. Hamilton's speech of February, 1897, but also between that speech and his Budget speech of August 5 last. On the latter occasion he said, in self-defence, that "no one expected, when "we extended our sphere of influence over these "territories, that they would at once abandon their "predatory and pugnacious habits." Why, that was precisely the expectation which Lord George Hamilton himself held out eighteen months ago. He now says:—

> "There is only one method by which the tribes along our Indian frontier can be permanently weaned from their old malpractices, and that is to so improve their material condition that they will not risk the advantages they have thus gained for the mere fun of fighting."

"The mere fun of fighting" is apparently a synonym for "fanaticism." But to most of us this fun or fanaticism seems rather to resemble what we call patriotism. Why should we resent in the tribes beyond our North-West frontier qualities which Englishmen admire in each other? And what paradoxical stupidity it is to suppose that we can make the tribesmen love us by building a road through their country, fortifying posts in it, and, in Lord G. Hamilton's latest phrase, "extending our sphere of "influence over them," when the proclamation of March, 1895, expressly declared that we had no intention of "interfering with their independence"!

The strangest feature of the whole disastrous business is that it is so totally unnecessary. The "forward" frontier policy, as every expert with the (present) exception of Lord Roberts declares, is not merely useless, but worse than useless. Its ostensible *raison d'être* is the possibility of Russian invasion of India by way of the North-West frontier. How absurd the notion of such an invasion is, we need not pause to show. But if we assume for the sake of the argument, and for the sake of the argument alone, that such an invasion is a likely contingency, how does the "forward" frontier policy help the defence of India? It begins by throwing away the enormous advantages of India's natural frontier. It reduces, if for ourselves then also for the invader, the difficulties of the rocky and mountainous region between Chitral and Peshawar by the construction of a military road. It kills off the bravest of the indigenous tribesmen, who fight us for their cherished independence—how many men, one wonders, who under a wiser policy would have been stout defenders of our frontier will be killed off before the present imbroglio is ended? It alienates the goodwill of the tribesmen who survive. And meantime it spreads discontent throughout India by imposing enormous burdens upon her impoverished taxpayers. Lord George Hamilton said on August 5 that the Tochi expedition was *estimated* to cost Rx.330,000, and that the cost of the Malakand expeditionary force would be Rx,400,000. Some time hence it will be our duty to compare these precious estimates with the actual cost. All we know

at present is that money is being poured out like water, and will continue to be until a doubtful peace is once more patched up. Who is to pay the bill? If precedent be followed, the bill will be paid by the Indian taxpayers. But that would be a monstrous injustice. The "forward" policy, whatever else may be said or thought of it, is essentially an Imperial policy, and should be paid for from the Imperial exchequer. Once let that point be secured, and the "forward" policy is doomed. But how, and by whom, is it to be secured? And who can say that the fighting of the past six weeks is not the forerunner of a third invasion of Afghanistan? The *Times*, and especially the Simla correspondent of the *Times*, seems to be heading in that direction, and the Amír himself can hardly fail to perceive that, while our operations beyond the North-West frontier are of no conceivable value for the defence of the frontier, they might very well prove of service as the forerunners of another invasion of his dominions. That would be a calamity of the first magnitude.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CONGRESS.

"So far from being in any way objectionable, the Congress affords an open, honest and loyal means of making the views and wishes of the most intelligent section of the Indian people known to the Government. We want no secret societies . . . either here or in India; and I firmly believe that, if the Congress or any similar institution had existed in India in the year 1857, we should never have experienced the horrors of the Indian Mutiny."—The Right Hon. Sir Richard Garth, Q.C., in the *Law Magazine and Review*, February, 1895.

IT might have been expected that among the reflections excited in the Anglo-Indian press by the cowardly assassinations at Poona one would find at least some friendly words of encouragement to an organisation so loyal and constitutional as the Indian National Congress. The murder of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand has been denounced and deplored by every section of the Indian community. But in no section has it aroused more profound indignation and dismay than among the supporters of the Congress movement. To them it appears in the light not only of a foul and detestable crime, but also of a humiliating calamity, suggesting that many years of patient work have after all failed in their primary purpose—the purpose, namely, of directing into strictly constitutional channels any sense of public injustice and demand for redress of grievances.
"We want no secret socie [illegible] Sir Richard
Garth—a strong Tory, a P [illegible] llor, a former
Chief Justice of Bengal—in [illegible] of the Con-
gress against the vituperatio [illegible] ge Chesney.
To resist "underground" m [illegible] sedition
impossible—that is and has [illegible] work of
the Congress in its zeal for [illegible] British
rule in India. It was to b [illegible] re, we
repeat, that in the critical [illegible] which
India is now passing the publ [illegible] nglo-
Indian opinion would hold [illegible] d to
such an organisation. But t [illegible] hing
of the kind. On the contr [illegible] many
words laid the [illegible] ge of
the Congress [illegible] s and
all its works in language which one can only describe as ferocious.

The paradox is sufficiently amazing. But it would have been still more amazing if its authors had not, ever since the foundation of the Congress, assailed it with vehement abuse. Sir Richard Garth, in the article from which we quote above, carefully examined the composition and the work of the Congress, and it may be interesting at this moment to recall the substance of what he said. The value of his testimony, we may remark in passing, is as high as could well be. His Toryism is beyond reproach. His capacity to weigh evidence is that which one expects to find in a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. And he went out to India in 1875, "believing, as most Englishmen do, that our government there was a model of paternal rule." Sir George Chesney described the supporters of the Congress as a set of inept blundering political charlatans whose proceedings, when they were not merely silly, were undoubtedly mischievous. Sir Richard Garth's description is rather different:—

"The Indian National Congress," he wrote, "is a large, influential and important assembly of earnest and patriotic gentlemen who, since 1885, have at the close of each year met at one or other of the large centres in India, such as Calcutta, Madras or Bombay, to discuss their political views and opinions."

The delegates of the Congress, duly elected from every part of India, were, Sir Richard found, thoroughly representative in point of rank, profession and religion. So far as Bengal was concerned, he wrote: "I am personally acquainted with several "of these gentlemen. They have often been guests "at my own house. I have met them constantly in "the best native society in Calcutta, at Government "House levées, and at Government House parties." And what had they done to deserve the invective of Sir George Chesney and his friends? Here is Sir Richard Garth's answer:—

"I will tell you what they have done. They have dared to think for themselves; and not only for themselves, but for the millions of poor ignorant people who compose our Indian Empire. They have been content to sacrifice their own interests, and to brave the displeasure of Government, in order to lend a helping hand to those poor people. They have had the courage and the patriotism to denounce abuses which have disgraced our Indian rule for years past; which have been condemned by public opinion in India and in England, and to which the Indian Government appear to cling with a tenacity which seems utterly inexplicable. They have dared to propose reforms which, despite the resistance of the Government, have been approved by Parliament, and to endeavour to stay that fearful amount of extravagance which has been going on in India for years past, and has been the means, as some of our best and wisest counsellors consider, of bringing our Eastern Empire to the verge of bankruptcy. That is what these good men have done to deserve the taunts and insults of the member for Oxford city, and the relentless persecution of the Government of India."

Sir Richard Garth, it may be added, did not agree with all of the resolutions adopted by the Congress. But he was in no doubt whatever as to two points. The first was the perfect loyalty of the Congress:—

"I defy any man to find fault with the perfect loyalty and respect to her Majesty and the Ruling Power, with which its proceedings are conducted. I have studied them from time to time very carefully; I have never seen a single instance of any disloyal sentiment or expression."

The second point was the treatment meted out to the Congress by the Government of India:—

"Of all the many acts of injustice which have marked the conduct of the Government of India of late years, there is none in my opinon which can at all compare with their insolent treatment of the Indian National Congress. There is no subject, I consider, upon which the English press and the English public have been so cruelly and persistently misled by the Government party."

We make no apology for quoting at such length from Sir Richard Garth's trenchant article. His judgment, we submit, carries more weight than the maledictions of anonymous detractors in the *Times* and elsewhere. The Congress of course is not in any sense upon its trial. It has long since passed that stage. All that the Anglo-Indian journalists who are now giving such marvellously bad advice to the Government of India succeed in showing is that, in their opinion, criticism is of necessity sedition. Their cynical theory appears to be that, under circumstances of admitted difficulty, the best friends of the Government of India are those who invariably and lustily urge it along the path it pleases to take, while its worst enemies are those who point out the pitfalls they perceive and, in a spirit of friendly helpfulness, offer suggestions and, if need be, warnings. It is as if a wayfarer travelling along a dark road in a strange country should revile and furiously assault any of the inhabitants who dared to put him on his guard against difficulties and dangers that threatened him. The young gentlemen who produce the *Pioneer*, and journals of the same type, seem to suggest that an Indian who dares to make a suggestion, or to resent a grievance, deserves imprisonment. It is a strange view. But perhaps it is the business of quasi-official journalists under a military despotism to hold that view and to defend it. One thing, however, is certain. It is not a view which is likely to be entertained by rational Englishmen at home. For it necessarily involves one of two assumptions—either that the Government is perfect or that discontent must be systematically driven inwards. The Indian National Congress is not likely in the long run to suffer in consequence of official, or quasi-official, persecution. But such persecution is nevertheless a pity—for its authors. As for the abuse which has lately been poured in certain quarters upon this journal as the organ of the Congress, we need only say that some accusations are too grotesque to merit reply. We have nothing to retract, and do not estimate the amiable threat of "suppression" at the value of a brass farthing. India has come to stay; and the ampler scope offered by weekly publication will, we trust, in the near future tend somewhat to diminish our shortcomings in the not too easy task of seeking to bring more closely together the peoples of India and the United Kingdom.

We fancy the nail has been hit on the head by one gentleman who poses as an authority on Indian matters. It is the opinion of an old man, who well remembers the Mutiny and the causes that led up to it. The chief cause in his view is the total lack of sympathy between the native and European races. All other reasons, or so-called reasons, are merely details. This is the great cause underlying all others.—*Financial Guide.*

THE CASE FOR ENQUIRY AT POONA.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN AND HIS CONSTITUENTS.

The following letter from Sir W. Wedderburn M.P., to the editor of the *Banffshire Journal* appeared in that newspaper on August 17:—

Sir,—I have no reason to complain of the terms in which you refer, in your issue of the 3rd instant, to my personal explanation in the House of Commons—on the contrary I take this opportunity to express my thanks—but as there may exist among my constituents some misapprehension regarding the circumstances under which I expressed my regret on that occasion, will you allow me, in your columns, briefly to state the facts so far as I am personally concerned.

I do not think the people of this country fully realise the misery suffered during this year by the unhappy people of India, and how their minds are distracted by their accumulated misfortunes. Men, women and children are still dying in thousands from hunger. And in Poona to the famine was added the bubonic plague in a horrible form; and to the plague were added stringent measures of house visitation and segregration, parties of military being employed to enter and search dwelling-houses, to examine the inmates, and to remove those believed to be infected to a plague camp at a distance from their homes. Such measures, however necessary and beneficial under the circumstances, would in any community be likely to arouse excitement and irritation, especially among the ignorant. But in India where domestic privacy and caste observance are valued almost more than life, very strong feeling must unavoidably be aroused under such circumstances. The people in Poona unhappily became excited, and even panic-stricken; wild rumours spread abroad; and the disasters of the situation culminated on June 23, in the lamentable assassination, by some unknown hand, of Mr. Rand, the Chairman of the Poona Plague Committee.

The situation was a serious one, demanding full and careful enquiry into the facts, with calm judgment and kindly consideration for the suffering condition of the people. But what did the authorities do in India and at home? As the assassin of Mr. Rand could not be discovered, the Bombay Government quartered upon the city of Poona a large force of [illegible]lice, to be paid for by the inhabitants [illegible]ned by the famine, thus punishing th[illegible] and suffering many for the guilt of a f[illegible] Lord George Hamilton, in the Hou[illegible]s, spoke ominously of the need for[illegible] liberty of the native Press. Now su[illegible] oppression appeared to me under[illegible] to be neither just nor safe. Lord [illegible] assumed that the Press creat[illegible] at Poona. But it is more in accor[illegible]ence to suppose that the Press had [illegible] voice to a popular feeling alrea[illegible] there were also special reason[illegible]ith the plague admin[illegible]uished from

Bombay, where the operations were successfully carried through by General Gatacre. In Bombay the search parties were accompanied by committees of native gentlemen, who explained matters to the people, and the guards employed were native Sepoys, who understood and sympathised with the popular prejudices, and could enter the houses of their fellow caste men without offending religious feeling. Accordingly in Bombay the people were practically reconciled to the measures adopted, and all passed off quietly. But unfortunately in Poona two serious mistakes were made: First, European soldiers were employed upon the delicate duty of house visitation; and second, the complaints made in connexion with this work were not properly enquired into. The European soldiers employed are deserving of all honour for carrying through this dangerous and distasteful work of searching and dealing with plague-stricken houses; but no one supposes that they could realise the acute mental pain of Hindus and Muhammadans if a stranger and foreigner enters the rooms reserved for the preparation of food, the performance of religious ceremonial, and the seclusion of women. Misunderstandings and grievances must necessarily arise under such trying circumstances; and unfortunately complaints thus arising were not properly enquired into. Numerous petitions were presented to Mr. Rand from time to time, and on May 20 a formal memorial was addressed to the Bombay Government, purporting to bear the signatures of some 2,000 inhabitants of Poona, Hindu and Muhammadan, couched in moderate terms, and complaining of ill-treatment and oppression. To the memorial was added an appendix, containing specific charges signed by the parties aggrieved. This memorial was presented to the Government by the Presidents of the leading Hindu and Muhammadan Associations of the Deccan. And I maintain that a memorial of such a character should have been dealt with at once. Full and impartial enquiry should have been made. If the complaints were substantiated redress should have been afforded; if they proved to be false, those making the charges should have been punished. In no other way can the good name of the British administration be maintained. Unfortunately no such enquiry had been made nor had any answer been sent to the memorialists up to the month of July when I questioned Lord George Hamilton on the subject in the House of Commons.

From the above narrative it will be seen that the question at issue between the Indian authorities and myself was, whether severe measures of repression should be employed, through the police, and by restrictions on the press; or whether grounds had been shown for a thorough and impartial enquiry into the whole Poona plague administration, in order to ascertain the causes which had led to such deplorable results. As I could not obtain any assurance from Lord George Hamilton that such an enquiry would be instituted I decided to bring the matter before the Indian Parliamentary Committee, an informal body of about 120 members, not pledged to any special measures, but interested in India, and desirous of promoting a just and sympathetic policy towards her. At that time there were in London four representative Indian gentlemen of high character, who had been deputed from Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and Poona to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure, presided over by Lord Welby; and I invited these four gentlemen to the Conference Room of the House of Commons, in order that they might at first hand, place before the Indian Parliamentary Committee their case from the Indian point of view. Professor Gokhale, who represented Poona, had left that place in March, but he had been kept informed by correspondence of what was going on, and he described to the Committee the miserable and distracted condition of the people, under the combined calamities of famine, plague, house searching, and punitive police. He stated that the wildest rumours were abroad, and that two of his correspondents, in whom he had confidence, had informed him of a current report in Poona that two native women had been outraged by European soldiers, and that one of them had committed suicide. I most sincerely regret that this statement was ever made; but I am bound to express my belief that Mr. Gokhale, who was much moved by the sufferings of his friends in Poona, mentioned the existence of the rumour, not with evil intent, but in order to show the extreme necessity for that full enquiry, to obtain which was the sole object of the meeting. When it appeared by telegram from Bombay that no proof was forthcoming in support of the charge, I at once expressed in the most public way open to me, my deep regret that I had directly or indirectly been instrumental in giving currency to a charge which proves to have been unfounded.

Many hard things have been said of me in this connexion, and I leave it to the public, on a consideration of the facts above set forth, to decide whether they have all been deserved. I may perhaps point out that this is no party question. Secretaries of State for India, whether in or out of office, give voice only to the official view of Indian affairs, and the case for India is rarely heard in this country. I think therefore that I may not unreasonably claim some sympathy and support from independent public opinion in my endeavours, however weak and defective, to make known the Indian view of the case, and thus to help the people of this country to hear both sides, and to fulfil their responsibilities with regard to India. The people of India have so little voice in the management of their own affairs, that it is all the more necessary to listen patiently and kindly to their complaints, especially when, as now, they are almost at the point of despair from the accumulated misfortunes that have fallen upon them.
—I have, etc., W. Wedderburn.

Banff, 16th August, 1897.

If any faith can be placed—and we think a good deal may—in the statements of the citizens who memorialised Lord Sandhurst, the inhabitants of Poona have been subjected to a reign of terror, due to the irregular and oppressive high-handedness of the special agency employed by the Plague Committee. The memorialists had but little fault to find with the rules made by the Committee under the orders of the Government, but they alleged that the regulations were often violated, and that redress was sought in vain.—*South-Eastern Gazette.*

"THE SKELETON AT THE (JUBILEE) FEAST."

We select the following from the newspaper comments upon Sir W. Wedderburn's articles on the Indian famine which, as we stated in our last issue, were reprinted in pamphlet form, under the title, "The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast," and circulated to members of Parliament, in view of the debate on the Indian Budget.

In a review printed on July 28 the *Daily Chronicle* wrote:—

This pamphlet is a reprint of a series of articles that appeared in INDIA, February to June of this year, dealing with the condition of the Indian rayat, or cultivator of the soil. An introduction has been added, and, by permission of the proprietors of the *Graphic*, there is a picture by way of frontispiece showing the condition to which some of these unfortunate Indian peasants have been reduced by their present circumstances. But it must not be supposed that this pamphlet is a mere catalogue of famine horrors—indeed, it only deals incidentally with that calamity—it is a sober and suggestive examination of the general conditions under which, whether there be famine or whether there be plenty, the Indian cultivator lives his life of monotonous toil. Sir William Wedderburn speaks with knowledge of his subject, for he spent many years of his life as an Indian civilian among the people of the Deccan. His main contention is that with certain reasonable reforms in the administration the rayat might become moderately prosperous, instead of as at present continuously impoverished, so that at the approach of famine he might be possessed of such a store of food, money, or credit, as would enable him to tide over the evil days. There are several important points to which he draws attention, of which we will notice two:—

(1) The need for the establishment of agricultural banks to enable the rayat to obtain his working capital at reasonable rates of interest.

"In Germany alone there are some 2,000 such banks, doing a business amounting to something like 150 millions sterling, with immense benefit to the rural population. Every other country in Europe has followed the example of Germany; the Autocrat of all the Russias started such banks with liberal support; and even the unspeakable Turk has made some movements in the same direction. In India alone nothing has been done. The Autocrat of the India Office would neither move himself, nor allow others to move."

A scheme for an agricultural bank took shape at Poona. It received the cordial support of the local authorities and the Supreme Government in India; a unanimous despatch signed by the Viceroy and his colleagues was sent to the Secretary of State asking for his sanction for the scheme; public opinion in England was favourable; the Press, including the *Times*, gave their approval; Lancashire smiled on the scheme; and in the City of London the financial house of Rothschild regarded the proposal with interest and favour; but the India Office stood in the way.

"The scheme represented the care and labour of many minds for many years; it had in it promise of relief to suffering millions; and it had no open enemies. But as it entered the portals of the India Office it was stabbed in the dark, and I say that the act was a crime against the people of India."

(2) The harsh and rigid collection of the land revenue, which, contrary to immemorial custom in India, takes no account of good and bad seasons.

"This method of fixing an average demand, to be levied in cash, irrespective of the crop, may suit the case of capitalist farmers. But it has fairly broken the back of the rayat, who is a mere peasant living from hand to mouth. . . . . He says, 'In former days there were Rájás that were good, and others that were bad; the good ones took a small share of our crop, and the bad a large share; but Heaven never before sent us a Sirkar (Government) which takes from us, when we have no crop at all.' . . . . I remember well, in the early days of my service, a benevolent collector trying to persuade a venerable village Patel of the advantages of a fixed average payment. But the old man replied by a parable. He said. 'Oh, Saheb, I will relate to you a story. A traveller coming to a river found a man sitting there, and asked him how deep the river was. The man replied. "Four feet deep," so the traveller proceeded to cross the river. It was true that the river was four feet deep *on the average*, but there was a deep hole in the middle, and into that hole the traveller fell and was drowned. Now if all we rayats go to the bottom in a bad year, what good will a moderate assessment do to us after that?'"

The fact is that the punctual demand for a fixed cash rent has altogether changed the relative position of debtor and creditor—*i.e.*, of the rayat and the village *saukar*, or money-lender; while the substitution of our impartial but unfeeling debt courts for the old village *Panchayats* or courts of arbitration, where justice was tempered with the rough equity of public opinion has turned the creditor into "a grasping hard-hearted oppressor"—[look at the Gordons and Kirkwoods of England who flourish under our laws]—and the debtor into "a crouching false-hearted slave." In the first place, as all the rayats want cash on the same day to pay the tax, the money market gets very tight, and the local usurer can dictate any terms. In the second place, payment is demanded while the crop is unripe, so that in default of payment the crop may be available for seizure. Of course just before gathering his crop the rayat is like the rest of us just before pay-day—pretty well destitute of cash. In the third place, the revenue authorities, by their readiness to sell up defaulters lock, stock, and barrel, deliver the unfortunate peasants bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of the village Shylock. These statements are not the mere vapourings of a Congress-walla. They are the sober conclusions of a Commission held in India to enquire into severe agricultural disturbances in the Deccan.

"Their conclusions were, in substance—first, that the rayat was driven to the money-lender by the harsh and rigid enforcement of the Government revenue demand; and secondly, that once in the toils of the money-lender the rayats case was hopeless owing to the irresistible weapons furnished to the creditor by our Debt Courts. The Commissioners at the same time exploded certain time-honoured fallacies, such as the theory that the ruin of the rayat was caused by his extravagance in marriage and other ceremonies, the Commissioners reporting that for these purposes he did not spend more than was reasonable under the circumstance."

There is much more in this interesting pamphlet bearing directly on this momentous question—the condition of the Indian rayats who are from eighty to ninety per cent. of the whole population of India. We trust it will be circulated widely, for we are sure that the moderation and evident knowledge with which it is written cannot fail to strengthen the reasonable demand for a village enquiry into the condition of the Indian cultivator which Sir William Wedderburn makes, and which we believe would yield most valuable and much-needed information to the rulers of India.

The *Gloucester Journal* wrote on July 31:—As usual the affairs of India will come before the House of Commons at the fag end of the Session on the Indian Budget, when so great is the interest taken by our legislators in our vast Empire in the East that Indian affairs are generally discussed to a beggarly array of empty benches. The officials have, of course, to remain, and there will always be found a little band of men who have made a study of the question ready to plead the cause of the Indian native. But it is hard, up-hill work, and so other means have to be taken to inform the British public of the condition of their fellow-subjects in the East. It will be seen from a motion given elsewhere that when the Indian Budget is reached next week Sir William Wedderburn will ask for an exhaustive village to village enquiry with a view to discovering what are the evils which make famine and pestilence so rife in parts of India. The awful condition of hundreds of natives from starvation and plague was a dark spot in the general brightness of the Jubilee time, and now that India is a little more to to the fore, it is sincerely hoped that the problems which urgently call for solution will be seriously considered, and haply, a beginning made towards the ending of some at least of the things that contribute so largely to the present depressing state of things.

No one has laboured with steadier persistency on behalf of the Indian rayat than Sir William Wedderburn. In and out of Parliament, by pen as well as voice, our neighbour of

Meredith is unceasing in urging the claims of the people we have taken under our rule. There has been printed this week, and a copy has been sent to every member of Parliament so that none shall plead ignorance when Indian affairs come on, a pamphlet consisting of reprints of articles which have appeared in "INDIA" dealing with the condition of the Indian rayat, or cultivator of the soil. The famine and the plague, are of course, referred to in its pages. The pamphlet, however, is in no sense a catalogue of such horrors, but a serious and thoughtful examination of the present condition of things in India, with suggestions for remedies of evils which call aloud for removal. The flippant gentlemen who refuse to take the Indian advocates seriously, if they will take the trouble to read the pamphlet will not be able any longer to plead ignorance as an excuse for indifference towards Indian affairs. Sir William Wedderburn, it must be remembered speaks with authority. He knows the people for whom he pleads and their wants, and his conclusions are the result of opinions formed on the spot, he having lived as an official for many years amongst our Indian subjects.

Horrible as have been the reports from the famine and plague-stricken parts of India, we should not altogether despair, for hopes are held out that a recurrence of these awful afflictions may be mitigated, if not entirely prevented, by better methods than those which exist at present. In the articles from "INDIA" under review, Sir William Wedderburn sets out some of the more prominent evils which afflict the rayat, evils which he says have been admitted by the officials for the past thirty or forty years; and he claims to have proved that these evils are the direct result of ill-advised and revolutionary changes introduced by the British Government, and that when proper remedies are pointed out the administration will neither apply them itself nor let others do so. The evils are unnecessary. But there they are, and the result is a "state of economic collapse," whereas with a rich soil, a fine climate, a skilful, industrious, and frugal peasantry, India, "if she gets fair play, ought to be a garden, not a place of desolation." We cannot follow Sir William Wedderburn closely through his extremely able series of papers dealing with the history of how the Indian rayat has been brought to his present melancholy condition, but turn our attention more particularly to that part of the case which deals with the proposed remedies. The main contention is that with certain reasonable reforms in the administration the rayat might become moderately prosperous, instead of as at present continuously impoverished, so that at the approach of famine he might be possessed of such a store of food, money, or credit, as would enable him to tide over the evil days. The first necessity is the establishment of agricultural banks to enable the rayat to obtain his working capital at a reasonable rate of interest. This is not a novel suggestion, not new to readers of the Journal. Moreover, such agricultural banks are recognised institutions in other countries. We learn from the pamphlet that in Germany alone there are some 2,000 such banks, doing a business amounting to something like 150 millions sterling, with immense benefit to the rural population. Every other country in Europe has followed the example of Germany. In India alone nothing has been done.

Another contributory cause to the present distressing condition of the Indian rayat is the harsh and rigid collection of the land revenue, which takes no account of good or bad seasons. This method of fixing an average demand, to be levied in cash, irrespective of the crop, may, says Sir William, suit the case of capitalist farmers. But it has fairly broken the back of the rayat, who is a mere peasant living from hand to mouth. Sir William quotes the conclusions arrived at by a Commission held to enquire into severe agricultural disturbance in the Deccan in confirmation of his opinion:—

Their conclusions were, in substance—first, that the rayat was driven to the money-lender by the harsh and rigid enforcement of the Government revenue demand; and secondly, that once in the toils of the money-lender the rayat's case was hopeless owing to the irresistible weapons furnished to the creditor by our debt courts. The Commissioners at the same time exploded certain time-honoured fallacies, such as the theory that the ruin of the rayat was caused by his extravagance in marraige and other ceremonies, the Commissioners reporting that for these purposes he did not spend more than was reasonable under the circumstances.

When it is borne in mind that the rayats form from eighty to ninety per cent. of the whole population of India, it cannot surely be said that the question of their condition is not worthy the serious attention of Parliament and of the country. Sir William Wedderburn's informing and moderate articles must do good. He has made out a very strong case for the searching village enquiry asked for in the motion he will submit on the Indian Budget. But it would be unsafe to prophesy that the House (which has quite a facility for doing the wrong thing—or not doing the right thing—in Indian affairs) will give Sir William his desire.

The *Newcastle Leader* wrote on August 2:—Nobody requires to be told that our public men take little interest in the condition of our Eastern dependency. The few who endeavour to disseminate information are apt to be regarded as bores. Their persistence, however, is praiseworthy, and the special endeavours they make to direct attention to the grievances of the Hindus are not without influence upon English public opinion. As the annual debate on the Indian Budget draws near, pamphlets and circulars are distributed. This year the policy of the India Office will be challenged by Sir W. Wedderburn, who will move an amendment calling for an enquiry into the condition of the Indian villages. A similar demand was made last January, but it was not granted. When we remember that about 80 per cent. of the whole population of India lives in the rural districts, the condition of the villages is seen to be of the utmost importance. An investigation of the kind suggested could be wisely carried out, and the only obstacle to its being undertaken is the obstinacy of the India Office. It may, of course, be quite true that some of those who give great attention to Indian questions are inclined to exaggerate the evils of which they complain, and that native opinion may not be a safe guide. The friends of the Hindu can, however, point to indubitable evidence in support of some of their contentions. Ugly facts, which can neither be suppressed by officialdom nor require to be impressed upon our attention by the agitator, stand out with a prominence which cannot be gainsaid. Those who have no special knowledge of Indian affairs, nor any opportunity of acquiring such information, may well ask themselves the cause of that poverty which afflicts our Indian fellow-subjects. Why are they unable to make any provision for those disasters which periodically overtake them? Why does their industry appear so unprofitable? The climate is good, the soil of the country rich and fruitful.

Sir W. Wedderburn, in four articles reproduced from INDIA, endeavours to give an answer to those queries. As one who has had a long experience in our great dependency, the member for Banffshire is entitled to be heard upon the subject with which he deals. He entered the Indian Civil Service in 1859, served for a period as Acting Judge of the High Court of Bombay, and was subsequently chief secretary to the Bombay Government. It is true that some of his arguments are not new, but his statement of them is opportune, and it possesses a freshness and cogency which claim attention. Sir W. Wedderburn contends that the condition of the starving rayats is owing to their inability to secure capital at reasonable rates, and he makes certain suggestions by means of which they could obtain the financial accommodation they require. He advocates the establishment of agricultural banks. This proposal, of course, has been made before, but it failed to secure the confidence of the India Office. As far back as 1882, a banking scheme of the kind proposed took shape at Poona. After much consideration and discussion, all classes in the district were induced to approve the project. It was welcomed by the rayats; the village money-lenders promised their assistance, while the native bankers also agreed to co-operate with the promoters of the scheme. Indian officials of nearly all grades and opinions endorsed the idea. The Marquis of Ripon, who was then Viceroy, regarded it with favour; and, indeed, subject to certain conditions, the Government of India gave it suppport. It consented to facilitate the operations of the banks by remitting a part of the stamp duty on documents, and also a portion of the court fees in suits. In fact, the authorities in India, after having fully considered the scheme, were prepared to give it a trial.

It was, however, found impossible to secure the sanction of the India Office. Steps were taken to acquaint English public opinion with the features and objects of the scheme. Both Sir James Caird and Mr. John Bright approved of the plan. Public meetings were held in its support, and Lord Rothschild —then Sir Nathaniel—was reported to have stated that there

would be no difficulty in obtaining the capital necessary to make it a success. The advocates of this plan of giving financial assistance to the rayats, however, met with no encouragement from the Imperial authorities. One delay was encountered after another, and after a voluminous correspondence had taken place upon the subject, the scheme was defeated in the House of Commons in August, 1887. Sir W. Wedderburn admits that he is unable to say who was responsible for its abandonment, though he commits himself to the statement that when it "entered the portals of the India Office it was stabbed in the dark." Since the banking scheme was drawn at Poona, similar institutions have made great progress in several European countries. In Germany alone, as Sir W. Wedderburn points there are some 2,000 such banks, doing an annual business which amounts to about 150 millions sterling. In India, however, nothing has been done; and, as a result, the rayat is still in the grip of the money-lender. Moreover, the manner in which the taxes are assessed and collected exposes the population to serious inconvenience. Indeed, if the object of the authorities had been to place the cultivator of the soil in the hands of the usurer, no more effectual method could have been adopted. The Government not only insists upon a prompt payment of the taxes but demands them before the crops are ripe. The object of this policy, we learn, is that the crop may be available for seizure in case payment is not made. It is, of course, obvious that this course must expose the struggling rayat to great hardships. He finds demands made upon him at a time when he is least able to meet them, and when his resources have been spent in cultivating his crop. It is easy to see that his burdens might be lightened by some system of financial aid, and to many the suggestion to establish agricultural banks for this purpose will seem worthy of consideration. That the majority of the Indian population should be in a condition of chronic starvation is far from creditable to British rule. At present, the unrest which prevails in certain districts is causing great anxiety. It is impossible for statesmanship to prevent the recurrence of disease and famine. At any rate the processes of prevention must be slow. The social condition of the mass of the people might, however, be improved by a more thoughtful and less oppressive system of administration, so as to render them more able to withstand privations when they come.

THE "FORWARD" POLICY AND ITS FRUITS.

THE SO-CALLED "FRONTIER RISINGS."

SHALL INDIA PAY FOR IMPERIAL BLUNDERS?

In view of recent events in the regions beyond the North-West frontier of India, it may be of interest to recall briefly the so-called "frontier" wars of the last three years. On November 3, 1894, telegrams from Quetta announced an attack on Colonel Turner's camp at Wano by the Waziris, said to have been roused by the preaching of the Mullah Powindah. Severe hand-to-hand fighting took place, the attack was repulsed, and reinforcements were ordered up. In a week 5,000 men were at Wano, and reserves were being concentrated at Dera Ismail Khan. Terms were dictated to the tribesmen. The return of "stolen" arms and horses was demanded. The banishment of the Mullah and the surrender of six notorious malcontents was also insisted on. Early in December the enemy's force melted away, but on the 13th compliance with these terms was refused. Sir William Lockhart thereupon issued the usual proclamation reciting the wrongdoings of the tribesmen, and an advance in three columns was ordered. The respective destinations of the columns, Rasmak, Makin, and Kunigaram, three villages lying at intervals of twelve miles on a line running south-west from Rasmak, were reached with little opposition. Some of the tribes offered to come in at the beginning of January, 1895, but nothing less than a complete and general surrender of all the Mahsud Waziris was considered adequate. A few weeks were employed in destroying forts and capturing cattle. Then, on January 22, a council of chiefs met Sir William Lockhart, who dictated detailed terms, and fixed March 1 as the latest day for the fulfilment of his conditions. Within a week all except the Mullah Powindah's own tribe had come in. Nevertheless a column was detached early in February to open up the Tochi Valley, notorious in these latter days. Meanwhile the demarcation of the frontier was undertaken, and the guns and the fines and hostages imposed on the tribesmen were gradually brought in. In the first week in March the Tochi Valley was explored, and the terms imposed by Sir William Lockhart were finally complied with. The demarcation of the frontier was finished on April 5, 1895, and the troops were withdrawn. The hopes of the *Times* correspondent that an opportunity might be taken to open up the Tochi Valley, "the shortest route to Ghazni," had been realised.

Before the extinction of the feeble effort made by the Waziris the Government had blundered into a much more serious enterprise farther north. On January 11, 1895, Indian telegrams stated that in the absence of particulars about the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk of Chitral the Government would take no immediate action. Fifty Sikhs were despatched to strengthen the escort of Lieutenant Gurdon, the British Resident, who assured the authorities that there was no need for fears as to his safety. Amir-ul-Mulk, perhaps because he was of weak intellect, had escaped the general massacre which formed part of the disturbances on the death of the Mehtar, Aman-ul-Mulk in 1892. His character made him a convenient instrument of intrigue, and he was induced to murder his half-brother, Nizam-ul-Mulk, the reigning Mehtar. Dr. Robertson, who had been sent up to Chitral as political agent on receipt of the news of the Mehtar's murder, withheld for the time his recognition of the new ruler in accordance with the declared policy of the Government. This policy consisted in recognising the *de facto* ruler, and abstaining from interference in family quarrels. At the end of January Umra Khan had invaded Chitral, and on February 9 captured the important fort of Darosh on the southern road. He assured the British Commissioner in the Kumar Valley of his peaceful intentions towards the Government, and expressed a desire to make peace with Amir-ul-Mulk. Robertson had entrenched himself in Chitral fort where Amir-ul-Mulk, to whom he accorded a temporary recognition on February 14, joined him. Five hundred rifles had been pushed forward to protect the Resident, and he had supplies for six weeks. Fresh complications were introduced by the escape from Kabul of Sher Afzul, who had ruled for a few weeks in 1892 until Nizam-ul-Mulk drove him out. Supported by Umra Khan the new-comer captured Chitral, and on March 2 was recognised as ruler by the Chitralis,

who believed that the Amír had connived at his escape and supported him. The Resident abandoned the avowed policy of the Government, but his action appears to have gained official approval. He still clung to Amir-ul-Mulk and was besieged in Chitral fort. Sher Afzul complained later, not without some show of reason, that Dr. Robertson did not meet him half way when war might have been avoided by diplomacy. Telegrams on March 11 announced that anxiety was felt with regard to Dr. Robertson. Three days later Umra Khan had been warned to quit Chitral before April 1, and 14,000 men were ready to march from Peshawar. There was a consensus of opinion in India, according to the *Times* correspondent, that nothing but the strongest reasons could justify the Government in entering on a task so difficult and fraught with such great responsibilities. On the 19th a proclamation was issued declaring the intention of the Government to expel Umra Khan without permanently occupying any of the territory passed through, or injuring the tribesmen, so long as they refrained from hostilities. With the exception of the *Times of India* the Anglo-Indian Press condemned the action of the Government. Three days later news arrived that Captain Ross and 54 men had been killed on March 16 in an attempt to force a way from Mastuj, on the northern road, to Chitral. Lieutenants Fowler and Edwards were treacherously taken prisoners a day later. The advance was ordered on March 31. General Sir Robert Low, with three brigades, stormed the Malakand Pass, and occupied Aladand, Thama, and Chakdara, on the Swat river, which was bridged after infinite trouble. Colonel Kelly in vain tried to force his way through the snow-blocked passes from Gilgit, but left Captain Borradaile with 300 men to make a further effort, which proved successful after incredible exertions and suffering on the part of the troops. Colonel Kelly followed, and Mastuj was relieved on April 9, after sharp fighting. The 80 miles of country between Mastuj and Chitral were covered in ten days, and Colonel Kelly entered Chitral on April 20 without opposition. The Khan of Dir had advanced with his levies on the 18th, and Sher Afzul and Umra Khan had both retired without fighting. A week later Sher Afzul and a large number of other prisoners were brought in by the Khan of Dir, but Umra Khan had made good his escape, and was sent to Kabul by the commander-in-chief of the Amír's forces. Shuja-ul-Mulk, son of Aman-ul-Mulk, and a mere boy, was appointed Mehtar, and the question of the future administration of Chitral was discussed. General Gatacre, with a flying column, reached Chitral on May 10, and Sir Robert Low entered the town a week later. Arrangements were made for a permanent camp at Kala Darosh, a fortified post garrisoned by one regiment at Chakdara, and a brigade in camp at Malakand. The road from Chitral to Darosh is held by the native regiments stationed at Darosh, from Darosh to Dir by Chitral levies, and from Dir to Chakdara by the Khan of Dir's levies. The withdrawal of the first detachment of troops in the face of tribes "ready to spring to arms again on the slightest pretext" was accomplished amid congratulations from the same correspondents who, a few weeks later, discovered that the Chitralis were petitioning the British army to remain. The decision of Lord Salisbury's Government to remain at Chitral—a decision rendered possible by the General Election of 1895—was "warmly approved" at Simla, Simla opinion in August being obviously at variance with Anglo-Indian opinion generally in March. Shuja-ul-Mulk, with three headmen, formed a council, advised by the British Resident, for the administration of a mutilated Chitral.

Only a very superficial observer could have supposed the arrangements thus made to be permanent. On June 10 last the Waziris again initiated what has proved to be a widespread movement by an attack on Mr. Gee's escort at Dotoi, in the Tochi Valley. A retreat on Sherani was carried out with little loss, and reinforcements from Datta Khel, 15 miles away, repulsed the enemy. Unfortunately the few losses comprised, as is usual in these costly frontier expeditions, an unduly large proportion of British officers. A week later Simla had ordered a punitive expedition of two brigades, under Major-General Corrie Bird, and the proceedings of two years ago are being repeated. There is no organised opposition, though the Waziris carry on a desultory guerilla warfare. The inevitable proclamation was issued on July 14, and since that date the British forces have scoured the district, destroying fortifications and raiding cattle, while the tribes make reprisal by cutting of camels and supplies whenever they find opportunity.

Disturbances in Waziristan were followed by hostilities further north. Thana was the scene of the new outbreak. The "Mad Mullah" was reported to have been preaching a *jehad* in the Swat Valley, and succeeded in rousing the tribesmen to a determined attack on Malakand on the nights of July 26 to 28. Colonel Meiklejohn abandoned the weak north camp and retired within his entrenchments. A squadron of Bengal lancers got through to Chakdara, nine miles away, to strengthen the garrison there, and the Guides were ordered up from Hati Mardan, near Peshawar. Reinforcements were rapidly moved up and operations ordered on an extensive scale, under Sir Bindon Blood. Chakdara was relieved on August 2, just in time to forestall an attack by 6,000 tribesmen, and the garrison was doubled. The enemy suffered heavy losses in the fighting round Chakdara, and the Khan of Dir reported that he was dealing with those of his own people who had joined the attack.

Afghan regulars are said to have joined in the fighting, and the Amír's agents are reported to have been recalled from Bombay, Calcutta, Simla, and Karachi. The Mullah of Hadda raised a force of several thousand men to join in the attack on Malakand. His action was anticipated by the relief of Malakand, and he turned on Fort Shabkadr, 18 miles north of Peshawar. Here he was defeated with his Mohmand followers on August 9. Even the Afridis have taken up arms after years of tranquillity, and on August 24 captured Fort Maude in the Khyber Pass. Everything points to a widespread and determined revolt against the encroachments of the Government of India beyond the Indus—a signal illustration of the monstrous follies of the "for-

ward" policy which, under the pretext of securing a scientific frontier, is at once breaking down the natural defences of India, annihilating brave tribesmen who might in case of emergency have proved staunch allies, and spreading discontent among Indian taxpayers burdened with the enormous cost of a policy they hate and distrust.

II.—SIR JOHN ADYE'S VIEW.

General Sir John Adye wrote to the *Times* of August 12 as follows:—

I trust that those who are interested in the many difficult questions connected with our Empire in India, and more especially with our policy on the North-West Frontier, are watching the progress of events in the Swat Valley; and are not led astray by the assertion that it is a mere fanatical outbreak led by a so-called mad Mullah. In my opinion its cause lies far deeper, and is a direct outcome of what is termed the forward policy—that is, of forcing ourselves and our authority upon the independent border tribes who inhabit the secluded valleys far away amidst the great mountain ridges which radiate southerly from the many crests of the Hindu Kush. Let me recapitulate a little. When, early in 1895, our representative in Chitral, with a small force, was surrounded and in great peril, it became necessary to move troops of all arms, and in considerable numbers, from our frontier station at Peshawar and other places as quickly as possible to prevent a catastrophe. To effect our object, however, it also became necessary, in order to reach the distant valley of Chitral, that we should enter and pass across the adjacent valley of Swat and other territory inhabited by independent tribes, with whom we had no cause of quarrel, and who naturally might resent the appearance of our troops amongst them. At the commencement of the short campaign of 1895 we therefore issued a proclamation pointing out the circumstances, and assuring them that when our object had been achieved we would withdraw our forces and would in no way interfere with the independence and liberties of the mountain tribes whose territories we were compelled temporarily to traverse.

The expedition of 1895 was rapidly and successfully carried out; and so far as the military operations were concerned, nothing could have been more satisfactory. But when the war was over and our representative and small garrison had been released, we changed our policy, and instead of withdrawing from the country have continued to occupy it; have constructed a road and established permanent fortified posts along the line of communication from our territory to the far distant valley of Chitral. It is said that we have thus improved the condition of the inhabitants, have prevented feudatory incursions, and that we may therefore expect them gradually to become friendly neighbours.

I cannot for myself see that we have a right to expect any such result from what has been on our part practically a breach of faith and an assumption of authority in a country which did not belong to us. And now suddenly, when little more than two years have elapsed since we first entered the country, we find that the Swat tribes have broken out into insurrection, and with great vigour have attacked our posts; and have thus compelled us for a second time to send troops in great haste and at great cost over the border to save our beleaguered garrisons. The assertion is made that the outbreak is a mere isolated adventure by a few fanatical followers of a mad Mullah; but it is also admitted that they have already lost upwards of 3,000 men killed, besides large numbers of wounded; and, in my opinion, it is idle and foolish to represent it as a mere fanatical outbreak when it is evidently the outcome—the natural outcome—of what on our part is called a forward policy, and which, if persisted in, will lead us on into an indefinite number of expeditions very costly in themselves and unjust to the tribes concerned.

Where are we going to stop?

It must always be borne in mind that the tribes who inhabit the secluded valleys in the vast mountainous regions on our north-west frontier, though turbulent, poor, and half-civilised, are very brave and hardy; they are deeply attached to their families, and have a great love of their country and cherish its independence. In short, they possess qualities which we rightly admire in ourselves, and therefore deserve our respect and consideration.

These independent tribes inhabit a great mountain region, for the most part almost inaccessible, and if instead of involving ourselves in incessant frontier wars we would pursue with them the policy of conciliation and subsidies, which we now follow so successfully with their powerful neighbour the ruler of Afghanistan, we should in time secure their friendship and put an end to expeditions which, as I have pointed out, are unjust in policy and disastrous in a financial point of view.

There are many authorities, civil and military, who have had long experience in India, and especially in our North-Western Provinces, who, I believe, will agree with the views which I have expressed as to the policy which should be pursued with our brave, but somewhat turbulent, neighbours over the border.

III.—COLONEL HANNA'S VIEW.

Colonel H. B. Hanna wrote to the *Saturday Review* of August 7:—

In an article entitled "The Chitral Decision" which appeared in this Review on August 17, 1895, I pointed out the danger of isolating a small body of troops in Chitral and entrusting its precarious communications to tribal levies, raised from a people whose country we had just occupied, in violation of solemn pledges given them by the Indian Government.

What is the State of affairs to-day? The tribes whose opposition we escaped, two years ago, by deluding them with false promises, see in the impoverished and weakened condition of India, just emerging from famine and plague, and stirred, in parts at least, by resentment and discontent, the necessary favourable opportunity for regaining their independence. Within thirty miles of our old frontier they have surrounded two outposts, shut up

3,000 troops in an entrenched position, and compelled the Indian Government to mobilise other 12,000 men at the hottest and unhealthiest season of the year. 15,000 men will more than suffice to deal with the Swatis alone, but how if their fighting strength of 9,000 men is reinforced by 8,000 Bunirwals, 5,000 Utman Khels and 20,000 Mohmands? And who shall guarantee us against the contagion of revolt spreading to yet more distant tribes or against the danger of complications arising, through the Mohmands, with the Amír of Afghanistan, whose subjects they really are, though we claim to exercise a protectorate over some of them?

Meantime, what is happening in Chitral? The Indian Government is trying to communicate the fact of the Swati rising to the troops there in order that they may be on their guard and take all precautions for their own safety; but no one knows whether they have not already to deal with a rising of their own, and it is certain that help cannot reach them except *viâ* Gilgit till the hostile gatherings in the Malakand Pass have been entirely dispersed. Fortunately they are provisioned till next May, by which time we shall certainly have beaten the Swatis, if the revolt is confined to them, and probably have broken down even the largest combination that could be formed against us, Afghanistan excluded. But it will not be as easy as some people would have us believe. When a Reuter's telegram comments with complacency on the forced inaction of the British as likely to encourage a concentration of the enemy and thus enable us, on the arrival of reinforcements, to crush the rising at one blow, the man who sent it lays bare his own ignorance of the tactics of these mountaineers. If tribal gatherings kindly waited to suit our convenience and then allowed us to draw them into fighting pitched battles, the question of the wisdom of these occupations of their territories might be answered differently; but this is the very thing that they carefully avoid doing. When *we* concentrate *they* disperse, to close in again as we divide our forces—as divide them we must where long lines of communications have to be held—and crushing blows never have a chance of being delivered.

Still, when it comes to fighting we may count on beating our enemies in the end; only our victories in these mountainous countries are barren of results and win for us but a precarious peace. Over and over again the same work has to be done, at the same cost, and never to any good end. In all our new territories, from Quetta to Gilgit, there is nothing worth possessing, *except the confidence of the tribes*, and that, which under the frontier system established by Sir John Lawrence we were slowly but surely gaining, the forward policy has killed. Is there no hope that this fresh object-lesson may open the eyes of the British people to the folly of ruining India for the sake of protecting her against imaginary dangers? imaginary because, if it is so difficult for us to keep open the communications of a stationary force at Chitral, only 160 miles from our border, against the attacks of two or three tribes, the difficulties of Russian armies as they drew ever further and further away from their base would be nothing less than insuperable. This being a truth from which there is no escaping, will a Government whose own principal military advisers were opposed to the retention of Chitral persist in an occupation the fruits of which are, and ever will be, periodic wars resulting in a heavy drain upon India's dwindling resources?

The *Times* of August 10 contained the following letter from Colonel H. B. Hanna:

Will you grant me a little space in your columns in which to point out to your readers that by abandoning our Indus frontier we have lost all freedom of initiative as regards the independent tribes and must willy-nilly dance to their piping? In former days, when their territories lay beyond our advanced posts, if a tribe misbehaved at an inconvenient season of the year, we just shut up the outlets of its valleys, closed our markets to its traders, and waited quietly till it submitted or till it suited us to inflict upon it a more active punishment; and when we did move against it, in late autumn or early spring, it was with comparatively small forces, strong enough, however, to coerce an enemy whose stores of grain at the one season, whose growing crops at the other, and whose herds of cattle at both, were at our mercy so long as snow cut them off from their summer hiding places. This power of choice we possessed, because in the interval of waiting no life for which the Indian Government was responsible was in danger.

To-day, with small bodies of native or mixed troops pushed up hundreds of miles beyond our main line of defence, and with their communications in the hands of a long succession of tribes, the moment a rising occurs (always at the worst time of year for us) other troops must be hurried forward to the rescue of their comrades, at any cost of suffering and life—only those who have experienced it know what that suffering is—not a couple of squadrons or a regiment or two, as of old, but a couple of brigades, or, as is the case at this moment looking both to Tochi and Malakand, a couple of divisions, whilst money must be poured out like water on a transport which melts away as it moves. A precarious peace is all that these heavy sacrifices have gained for us in the past or can gain for us in the future unless we are prepared to hold in force the whole of the 78,000 square miles of rock and stone added to our Indian empire since 1878. That would mean the location of, at least, 40,000 troops in those miserable and unhealthy regions, every man of that number costing India three times what she has to pay for him within her true limits. Let the thousands of Englishmen who support the forward policy without troubling their heads to ask what it involves sit down and count the cost of making it successful, or at least safe, or even the cost of leaving it in its present state of crude and weak development dependent from day to day upon the forbearance of men whom we have no right to trust, not because they are treacherous, but because it lies in the nature of things that they should be our foes—and when they have counted, let them say whether the game is worth the candle. No compensation for our vast expenditure can ever be wrung out of the tribes; we cannot disarm them as we have disarmed the inhabitants of flat and cultivated countries whose conduct we could control at all times and seasons; and we cannot conciliate them because, though they may take our subsidies, money is in their eyes a poor equivalent for a loss of any portion of their independence.

"This may be all true," some persons may answer, "and yet no reason for losing our faith in the forward policy. Necessity can take no account of losses and difficulties, and if we must occupy these unprofitable countries to keep them from falling into Russia's hands, there is no use grumbling or looking back."

Yes, if we must; but let the men who talk like this open their eyes and see and understand the object-lesson which is being given for their instruction. Does not every fresh incident of the policy to which they cling teach the futility of the fears out of which it sprang? Can any man capable of putting two and two together read morning after morning in your pages the accounts of the efforts being put forth by the Indian Government to restore peace at a point but thirty miles from our frontier and seriously believe that Russian soldiers will ever cross the Swat river, whether we hold or abandon Chitral?

"But we are there, have been there two years; it is too late to go back." That is the last argument of the man convinced against his will. From a wrong path which we recognise as wrong we can go back if we choose, and in this particular case withdrawal is not only possible but easy, for no one concerned wants us to persist in our error. Not India, who protested against it at the time and groans under every addition to her military burdens; not the troops, who hate service far from their homes in strange and trying conditions; not the tribes, who ask nothing better than to be allowed to return to their old relations with us, relations under which—slowly, indeed, but surely—confidence and friendly feeling was growing up between us and them, not at this point alone, but all along the North-West frontier, as is conclusively shown by the absence of all punitive expeditions during the five years immediately preceding the resuscitation of the forward policy by Lord Lytton.

IV.—MR. ROMESH CHUNDER DUTT'S SUGGESTION.

We take the following from Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt's article in the August number of the *Fortnightly Review*:—

Sir Henry Fowler, when discussing the question of the present famine in the House of Commons, remarked:—"If it should prove to be the fact, notwithstanding the surplus of which the noble lord (Lord George Hamilton) has spoken, that this famine will entail, as I am afraid it will, a very considerable charge upon the revenues of India, for the loss from the land revenue will be considerable, I think that it is time for this House, and I am sure this House will be representing the people of the country—in the same spirit in which it made contribution in the case of the Afghan War to the Indian Exchequer—to make an Imperial contribution to the Exchequer of India in aid of the taxation of India." I am convinced my countrymen will appreciate the noble spirit in which this suggestion was made. But, nevertheless, if I am capable of forming a judgment in the matter, it is not in this shape that a contribution from the British Exchequer will be most acceptable to them. India has always paid for her internal administration, and while the people of the country desire to see economy enforced, they do not desire that a new departure should now be made, and that India should from time to time obtain donations from the British Exchequer for her internal administration.

The reference which Sir Henry Fowler made to the contribution made on the occasion of the Afghan War suggests the true and only method in which England could grant relief to India with justice, and India could receive it with dignity. India now pays not only for her internal administration, not only for the army and defensive works within her own limits, but also for the maintenance of England's Empire in Asia outside the limits of India. Burma, including the Shan States, is as large as France, and borders on the dominions of France and China. British possessions in the wilds of Beluchistan, Afghanistan and Chitral extend for hundreds of miles beyond the natural limits of India, and the expensiveness of the occupation and defence of these places is alarming. Little income is derived from the Shan States of Burma, or from Beluchistan, from Chitral or from Afghanistan, and India is bled for much of the cost of maintaining these portions of England's Asiatic Empire. England is the richest country in the world, India is one of the poorest. And yet India is made to pay for England's possessions and wars in Asia beyond her own natural boundaries.

Forty years ago, when India passed under the direct rule of the Crown, a pledge was given that the cost of wars outside India would not be charged to India. Within the period of forty years the limits of England's Asiatic Empire (miscalled India) have been extended to the frontiers of China in the east, and have been pushed forward into Afghanistan, Beluchistan and Tartary in the west; and the cost of these outside extensions has been charged to India. And within this period the expenses of India have so enormously increased that every responsible Indian statesman has been filled with anxiety, and every method of taxation, bearing more and more severely on the people, has been tried with poor and ghastly results. We seem to be coming back in despair to taxes which every civilised country has discarded. A scheme to re-impose tolls on roads and to levy a tax on every marriage is now under the consideration of the Bengal Government.

At such a time of need India can legitimately ask England to contribute a share of the vast military expenditure required to sustain her Asiatic Empire. It may be possible to ascertain roughly what proportion of the military expenditure of India is incurred for the occupation and defence of the frontier tracts outside India. And as the people of England are disposed, judging from Sir Henry Fowler's speech, to give some substantial relief to India out of the English Exchequer, the shape in which such relief would be most acceptable, as well as most equitable, would be the contribution of this proportion of the military expenditure, which India is no longer able to bear alone.

V.—"WE TOLD YOU SO."

In view of the events which are now taking place in the regions lying beyond the North-West frontier of India, it may be interesting to reproduce the article which was printed in INDIA for March, 1896, under the heading, "The Chitral Amendment: The Nescience of Lord G. Hamilton." The article was written with reference to the debate on Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the Address (February 17, 1896), which was in the following terms:—

"But we humbly express our regret that the present Government, reversing the policy of their predecessors, have decided not to withdraw from Chitral, thereby violating the pledge expressly given in the Viceroy's proclamation, dangerously adding to Government responsibilities beyond the North-West frontier of India and inevitably leading to an increase of the overgrown expenditure in the Indian Military Department, and further our regret that the treaty of 1893 with the Amír of Afghanistan has not been placed before Parliament."

Our article was as follows:—

Lord George Hamilton deprecated, in vehement and occasionally abusive language, the allegation that the retention of Chitral involved a breach of faith, and asked, rhetorically, if Sir W. Wedderburn was acquainted with the facts of the case.

Lord George Hamilton's amazing speech suggests

—not rhetorically—the same question with reference to himself.

The Viceroy's proclamation, he said, "merely applied to the territory between Peshawar and Chitral, and it had absolutely nothing to do with the people of Chitral."

The proclamation is given in full at page 39 of the Blue-book (C.—7,864), "Correspondence relating to Chitral." It contains these two explicit undertakings:—

(i) "The sole object of the Government of India is to put an end to the present, and prevent any future, unlawful aggression on Chitral territory, and as soon as this object has been attained, the force will be withdrawn.

(ii) "The Government of India have no intention of permanently occupying any territory through which Umra Khan's misconduct may now force them to pass, or of interfering with the independence of the tribes."

Each of these two promises was supplementary of the other. The first promised withdrawal from Chitral; the second promised that no intervening territory should be occupied. Taken together, these promises amounted to a complete pledge against occupation, and the question to whom they were addressed is a question of purely academic interest.

That the proclamation was intended to convey this meaning is conclusively shown by the Chitral Blue-book.

The date of the proclamation (which was not merely issued to the people of Swat and Bajaur, but was also "generally communicated upon the border") was March 14, 1895. On March 8 Lord Elgin had telegraphed to Sir H. Fowler that certain measures were necessary to "ensure" the "safety" of Dr. Robertson, and on the same day Sir H. Fowler had replied:—

"I am prepared to approve such action for securing safety of Robertson and party as you may deem necessary."

The proclamation was issued after the receipt of this reply, and it expressly stated that the purpose of the relief expedition was to compel Umra Khan to retire from Chitral.

Note Sir Henry Fowler's words "action for securing safety of Robertson and party." On March 18 Lord Elgin telegraphed that orders had been issued for the mobilisation of the first division of the field army. At once—on the same day—Sir H. Fowler telegraphed to Lord Elgin:—

"Please let me know why so large a force is considered necessary for securing safety of Robertson and party.

Again we have the phrase "securing safety of Robertson and party." There was not even a hint at that time—the time at which the proclamation was issued—of retention or occupation. Moreover, when the Government of India afterwards suggested the idea, Sir Henry Fowler replied (June 13, 1895. Blue-book p. 51):—

"Her Majesty's Government . . . . have decided that no military force or European agent shall be kept at Chitral, that Chitral shall be fortified, and that no road shall be made between Peshawar and Chitral. It will follow that all positions beyond our frontier, now held in consequence of the recent relief operations, should be evacuated as speedily as circumstances allow."

This was manifestly Sir H. Fowler's policy and intention from the outset. The expedition was a relief expedition, pure and simple. When Lord George Hamilton succeeded Sir H. Fowler, he permitted the Government of India to reverse this policy and to occupy Chitral, and he now vainly seeks to justify a glaring breach of faith on the ground that Chitral is "a much richer country than was anticipated." It would be an odd thing if a man charged with burglary sought to defend himself on the ground that his booty proved more valuable than he had anticipated.

Lord George Hamilton's assertion that the people of Chitral "welcome the English occupation" is open to two criticisms. The first is that, even if it were founded on fact, it would still be irrelevant. The second is that we have heard the same sort of thing before. In fact, Lord George Hamilton was answered in advance by Sir Auckland Colvin. In the *Nineteenth Century* for November last Sir Auckland Colvin wrote:—

"For the moment, all is painted *couleur de rose*. The Swat tribesmen, if Simla telegrams may be trusted, are not content merely to condone our occupation of such points in their territory as Chakdara and the Malakand Pass. They insist in demanding that the Government of India should administer their country. They would even be mortified at the refusal of their request. If this is so, nothing could be happier. . . . Still, it is well to recall to mind that something very like it has been heard on previous and analogous occasions. Events which belied the accuracy of precisely similar assertions in 1838 are now so distant that their echo has become well-nigh inaudible. But some may remember, and those who have forgotten may be reminded, that in 1838 there were not wanting voices which loudly proclaimed the delight of the Afghan nation at their deliverance from their elected ruler. Four years later, when Afghanistan had unmistakably spoken for itself, those voices were conspicuously silent. It came at length to be recognised that among the Afghans were many who, from complaisance, from compulsion, or from cunning, had protested too much; and whose too effusive expressions of welcome had misled many who were in haste to credit them. With that experience in our minds, it will be as well to suspend judgment as to the credence to be placed in the reports which reach us of the pleasure of the tribesmen at the permanent settlement of British troops within their borders. All that as yet can be seen clearly is that there has been made by the Government of India a fresh departure, which may lead to grave complications, either in the immediate or in a more distant future."

As for the cost of this "forward" move, Lord G. Hamilton said in reply to Sir W. Wedderburn that "he thought the expenditure would be less than was anticipated, and, so far from Indian finance being in a critical condition, they must bear in mind that there had been a considerable remission of taxation by the reduction in the cotton duties." In the same strain of ludicrous optimism Lord George, at the close of his speech, "congratulated his friends behind him that the first time they had to give a party vote last year they were actuated by true political instincts when, by an overwhelming majority, they assented to this forward movement. He believed there had been no forward movement in recent years made by any Government which had been more beneficial to all concerned." Against Lord George Hamilton's congratulations and beliefs we may well set the reasoned conclusions of an ex-Finance Minister like Sir Auckland Colvin. In the article in the *Nineteenth Century* from which we have already quoted, Sir A. Colvin wrote:—

"The situation . . . is surrounded by clouds and darkness. Is it a time to prophesy smooth things, to smile complacently, to exchange congratulations, to talk comfortably about the clouds going by? It seems, indeed, difficult to understand how it can be believed that the financial outlook, as was said

in the recent Indian Budget debates, is better than it was three years ago. Three years ago the necessity of re-imposing the cotton duties had not been demonstrated. The Famine Grant had not been appropriated to current revenues. Three years ago the Secretary of State sold his bills at 1s. $2\frac{9}{10}$d.; at present he barely touches 1s. $1\frac{3}{8}$d. The deficit three years ago was Rx. 800,000; now it is estimated at well over a million. For, three years ago, the forward frontier policy had been but recently revived, and we had not made the progress in creating and completing our new dominion and protectorate beyond the Indus which has been achieved of late. Frontier policy and Indian finance are as inseparable as foreign policy and finance in Western countries. There can be no improvement in Indian finance so long as Indian revenues are depicted by the claims of frontier extension, or exposed to the risk and requirements of war. Consequently there can be no vigorous internal policy, whether of railway development or of other kind. The most experienced are the first to recognise this. 'We know,' it was said in the course of the Chitral debate, 'that at the India Office, and among retired officers, the old-fashioned view prevails. But in India, and it is there where most responsibility rests, opinion is almost invariably opposed to it.' This reminds us of that other *dictum*, in its time also accepted, that 'the opinion of Colley on the frontier question was worth that of twenty Lawrences.' The 'old-fashioned' view has been indicated in the course of this paper, and in the words of its first and greatest exponent. It is the old-fashioned view to 'protest against the necessity of having to impose additional taxation on the people of India, who are unwilling as it is, to bear such pressure even for measures which they can both understand and appreciate.' It is the old-fashioned view to 'look for our true policy, our strongest security in the contentment, if not in the attachment, of the masses, in husbanding the finances of India, and in consolidating and multiplying its resources.' If in India, where most responsibility lies, these views are no longer in favour, let us learn why they have been discarded, and what are the views by which they have been replaced. If, on the other hand, their importance is still admitted, let us be told how they are to be made consistent with the present forward policy. Economy, the contentment of our Indian fellow-subjects, and multiplying the resources of British India may be merely the old-fashioned views of the India Office, of retired officers, of dead Viceroys, and of other unconsidered obscurities. But they are, at least, the views which in building up India in the past guided the great men who were charged with the task, and which enabled them to hand over the India of the present day, such as we still see it, to the men who are now responsible. Old-fashioned as they are, they are, therefore, views which will continue to challenge and command consideration till they have been proved unsuited to the India of the future."

These weighty words of Sir Auckland Colvin's, with their contempt of complacent smiles and congratulations, were, it seems, prophetic.

VI.—SOME OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

What the "Forward" Policy Means.

British India is defended on the north-west by a desert of stone and snow. It is so barren that an invading army would have to carry all the food needed by men and beasts for the passage across it. But it is so broad that a baggage mule, the hardiest of beasts, could scarcely carry enough provender to keep itself alive on the way. That is to say, it is impassable. India on that side is as safe as a house surrounded by a quicksand. Nature has interposed between her and her enemies that which can be trusted to deal with them if it is left as it is. But the Indian "forward" party will not trust it, and will not leave it as it is. They insist on throwing out into this waste of peaks and ridges, whose desolation is India's defence, long tentacles of military road and of political intrigue. It is as if a commander whose position was securely defended by a deep moat should throw in earth and make it shallower, so that the garrison might wade out and meet the enemy half way. The desert beyond the frontier is a sure defence to India, because there are no roads and no telegraphs, because there is no food, and because the mountaineers are wild and fanatical, and would without fail fall upon any force which tried to pass through their mountains to India. The "forward" party hope to amend the frontier by cutting roads and stretching telegraph wires, and dotting the desert with military and civil stations. They have a theory that the more the mountain tribes are beaten the better they will like us. Every few years a new point in the wilderness catches their fancy, and we must needs rush out and seize it. They already hint pretty plainly that the whole of the 600 miles of borderland from Quetta to the country north of Gilgit ought to be occupied, at the cost of many campaigns as serious as the Chitral campaign and endless "frontier incidents," as serious as the fighting at Malakand. Of course India, in spite of plague and famine, would have to pay for it all. Her people cannot afford to buy proper food, and yet they have to find money for the conversion of a first-rate into a second-rate frontier, in spite of the warnings of administrative and military experts quite as competent as those who advocate the change. The situation ought to be seriously studied by the unreflecting people who are now writing as if every Indian difficulty could be solved by suppressing Indian newspapers.—*Manchester Guardian*, July 29.

Wanted: A Little Statesmanlike Prudence.

Much of the trouble and anxiety which now perplex the Government of India might have been avoided by the exercise of a little statesmanlike prudence. The attack upon the camp at Malakand and the consequent renewal of the war in Chitral are directly and inevitably due to the precipitate action of her Majesty's Ministers in deciding to retain the Swat valley. Lord Salisbury and his colleagues had only been in office a few hours when they reversed the deliberate policy of their predecessors and gave their sanction to a breach of faith. After the gallant and successful rescue of Sir George Robertson by Sir Robert Low, the Government were pledged to retire and to leave these mountain tribes in the enjoyment of their previous independence. But the chance of annexation was too much for them, and they determined that, in the words of Mr. Balfour, whose martial ardour is almost as ludicrous as Mr. Goschen's, where British troops, or native troops under British officers, had gone, there the British flag should remain. We have it on the authority of Lord Rosebery that the members of his Cabinet, who carefully considered the question in all its aspects, and took the responsibility of overruling the Indian Government, were absolutely unanimous in favour of the evacuation of Chitral.—*Speaker*, August 7.

The Price of the Forward Policy.

There can be no doubt that after much bloodshed the rising will be put down. But if a wiser policy had been adopted, it would never have occurred. The Ameer himself, as well as the native tribes, has been thoroughly irritated and alarmed. This little war, which it may be hoped will not become a big one, is part of the price we pay for the forward policy. If it were worth while the British public would readily acquiesce. There is nothing so quickly condoned as a profitable annexation. But it is not worth while. We have gained nothing by the permanent occupation of Chitral. We have lost the confidence of the natives, and the security which that confidence engenders. Lord Dufferin by judicious diplomacy kept Abdul Rahman quiet, and he had been quiet ever since. He had his subsidy, and it was not his interest to intrigue against his paymasters. But for the sake of retaining a post which, from a military point of view, is worthless, we have thoroughly frightened him, so that he does not know how long his own dominions may be left in his possession. It is a thousand pities. Wise statesmen had by patience and courtesy obliterated the effect of Lord Lytton's evil and mischievous policy. The annexation of Chitral has revived the old suspicious dread of British encroachment, and made enemies of those who would gladly be our friends.—*Daily News*, August 19.

"The Interestingness of Life."

We suppose the Indian highlanders will become quiet after a time, but we are by no means sure that that opinion is not a bit of optimism. We cannot find them lands sufficient to make their lives comfortable. We cannot completely disarm them. We cannot deprive local chiefs of authority, for if we did it would all pass to much more dangerous Moollahs and headmen elected principally by their influence. We cannot alter their creed, which is essentially a creed for unscrupulous warriors. We can subsidise the chiefs, we can cut roads, and we can foster the habit of seeking careers within the native States, but we can do little more, and when we have done that

the two grand difficulties remain. The clans want something to eat, and something to do which born fighting men will look at. It is the difficulty of providing the latter which is the first permanent difficulty of our rule in India. We destroy of necessity the interestingness of life. We cannot, and do not, find careers for anyone who is not either of the *bourgeois* or of the professional type, and there are millions of men in India whom those two types do not include. It is useless to ask for a remedy. There is no remedy, unless, indeed, we should need and be able to pay, clouds of Indian soldiers for the garrison of tropical Africa, and that day though it is coming, is as yet far off.—*Spectator, July* 31.

THE CHITRAL PROCLAMATION.

The Indian Government has to make sure of its superiority in the field, if it takes the field at all; and to make sure of its superiority it has to make a serious addition to the military expenditure which is crushing the poorer taxpayers of India down to the earth. This calamity—an economic calamity if not a military one—answers in a painful fashion the speech made by Lord George Hamilton last year in defence of the policy of keeping Chitral and the road to it in violation of the Viceroy's promise. The famous proclamation promised that the Indian Government would not occupy any of the territories between Peshawar and Chitral, and that it would not "interfere with the independence of the tribes" inhabiting them. It was put to Lord George Hamilton that the promise was broken by the planting of a row of fortified posts and the making of a British military road between Peshawar and Chitral. To us the proposition seemed reasonable. We cannot but feel that if Russia were to insist on making and maintaining by means of Russian garrisons a military road through Afghanistan for Russia's convenience in invading British India, the independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan would be impaired. Or to take a more extreme case, it does seem to us that our independence would be interfered with if the German Emperor or the Tsar proceeded to make military roads and to build and garrison forts at any points which they thought proper between Dover and London. It is not, to our thinking, an extravagant conception of tribal or national independence which asks that other States should not make gaps in the strong natural frontier of the independent tribe or nation and garrison commanding points in its territory. To Lord George Hamilton it seemed otherwise. The tribes, he said, with an air of conscious conclusiveness, had not complained of any broken promise. Therefore it was outrageous that members of the House of Commons should complain of one.—*Manchester Guardian*, August 3.

While Nero was fiddling Rome was burning, and while Lord George Hamilton has been amusing Primrose Leagues (we notice that his last little speech was at another of these undignified gatherings), the great dependency which he is supposed to watch has been the scene of unwonted excitement, misery, and crime.—*Leeds Mercury, July* 28.

No man fights with so much courage and persistency as the religious fanatic, and there has been plenty of this kind of fighting in the Swat Valley. But there is now every reason to hope that the difficulty there will soon be at an end, and that it is not likely to recur. Unfortunately, however, small frontier wars are very costly, and this is one reason why the Indian Government is not in a better financial position. Whenever order has been permanently established—and there is no reason why this should not be done soon—the Indian Government will probably be able to reduce its expenditure.—*Nottingham Guardian*, August 7.

The Indian Government will be greatly affected for some time to come in its finances, and it must be assisted. Perhaps, when the worst has passed and the expenditure has been carefully calculated, along with the absolute loss of all rent from the farmers, it may be worth considering whether the Home Government should not vote national money to the assistance of Indian revenue. There has never been a famine in India so disastrous as the present one has been, and it will be absolutely imperative to ascertain whether the increased poverty of the lower classes in India has not been as operative in bringing it about as the failure of the rains.—*Sussex Daily News*.

INDIANS AND THE "DIAMOND JUBILEE"

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has received the following communication from the Home Secretary:—

Whitehall, August 3, 1897.

Sir,—I have had the honour to lay before the Queen the loyal and dutiful address of a conference of Indians resident in the United Kingdom congratulating her Majesty on the completion of the sixtieth year of her reign, and I have to inform you that her Majesty was pleased to receive the same very graciously.

The other matters referred to in the address will be considered by her Majesty's advisers.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) M. W. RIDLEY.

Dadabhai Naoroji, Esq.,
Cambridge Lodge, West Hill Road,
Southfields, S.W.

The notices of motion now standing in the Order-book of the House of Commons include the following:

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To move, That this House views with grave disapproval the fact that famine, plague, and pestilence in India have been seized by the Indian Government for an attack on the freedom of the press in India, and for the revival of the system of arrest of British subjects in India under the law of *lettre de cachet*, and the indefinite imprisonment without trial of persons thus arrested; and desires to place on record its conviction that the only safe foundation for government in India is to be sought in the extension to British subjects in India of the full privileges of the British constitution.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: To move, That looking to the condition of the masses of the Indian people and their grievous sufferings during the present year, this House desires to express its deep sympathy in their distress, and trusts that Her Majesty's Government will institute a detailed and searching Village Enquiry into the causes which blight the industry of the cultivators and render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: To call attention to the great loss and suffering caused to India by plague, famine, and earthquake, and to the desirability of the Home Government endeavouring to mitigate that distress by making a grant to the Indian Government for additional relief to the sufferers; and also to the need of more effective representation of Indian opinion in the Government of the country, so that greater economy may be practised in military expenditure, and more attention paid to internal reforms, especially in the direction of larger irrigation works and more extended elementary education.

SIR M. BHOWNAGGREE: To move, That this House views with concern the fact that the old industries of India are fast disappearing without being replaced by new ones to any appreciable extent, with the result that its vast population has to largely depend on the imports of foreign manufactures for even the most ordinary articles of every-day use, a circumstance to which is mainly due the condition of poverty under which large sections of the people of India still labour; and that, inasmuch, as the present system of education, among other causes, has had a tendency to divert the energies of the people from the preservation and development of industrial pursuits, this House is of opinion that an enquiry should be held, by such means as the Government of India consider advisable, with a view to ascertaining and suggesting measures for remedying the evils indicated.

MR. JAMES STUART: To call attention to the reply of the Government of India to the despatch of the Secretary of State of March 26 last, relating to the health of the Indian army; and to move, That this House disapproves of the repeal of the Cantonment Act Amendment Act of 1895.

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A writer in the *Times of India* finds great fault with us for holding that it would have been wiser not to use European soldiers for search parties at Poona during the plague. He accuses us, as far as we understand him, of wishing to "brand British soldiers as Bashi-Bazouks," and to "impute to them all the licence of a 'brutal soldiery.'" This is sad stuff. In the article on which it is an attack some pains were taken to express disbelief in the gravest charges that were then being made against European soldiers. At the same time we held strongly, in common with Anglo-Indians as experienced as Sir Lepel Griffin, that the employment of the European troops was a blunder, no matter how seriously they tried to do their delicate duty. We mention this article in the *Times of India*, with its attempt to "rush" difficult questions and its sneers at native character, as an illustration of an unfortunate change which the militarist policy is producing in India. "Nothing," as Sir Auckland Colvin says, "is so irreconcilable with the honourable spirit of self-reliance to which British rule has given birth among the people of India, and which is by no means incompatible with loyalty, as the tone which is imparted to the administration when the military element in its counsels gains ascendancy. That ascendancy makes itself felt in India as in all other countries, in a less sympathetic attitude towards the people, especially towards the more advanced or ambitious among them." The Anglo-Indian official class speak with positive ferocity now not merely of advanced and ambitious natives, but of those persons who in England attempt to form their own judgments on Indian affairs.—*Manchester Guardian*, (August 24.)

The commendable thoroughness of the precautions at Khana are *pro tanto* a censure on the insufficiency of them at Poona. This is not, as certain foolish Tory organs will have it, to applaud sedition and assassination. It is simply to point out that in all probability the émute did not proceed from the mere unrest of political agitators, but from a sense of grievance which, however ridiculous and inexplicable it may appear to Occidentals, is perfectly natural and intensely real to Orientals. If that be so, then the action of the officials was not sot so absolutely impeccable as Lord George Hamilton so invincibly insists. What is more, if Indian officials made mistakes (as all persons, even Secretaries of State, do at times), then the very worst course that could be pursued would be to deprive them, by suppressing the organs of native opinion, of the means of learning their errors in time to rectify them.—*Bradford Observer.*

From much reading of the *Times* and other Conservative papers we have learnt that the best place for learning the truth about Indian life is London, and that the worst places in the world for the purpose are Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. From the moment when a member of Parliament, especially if he be a Liberal member, goes to India to see it for himself, he seems to be ticked off as incompetent and discredited. On Monday, for instance, Sir E. Gourley asked the Secretary for India a question in the House of Commons, and yesterday the *Times*, which did not like the tenour of the question, brought against Sir E. Gourley the damning fact that he had visited India. One may learn, it seems, to rule India in a barrister's chambers in London, or in a Lancashire cotton mill, or in a Scotch country house. So long as one remains at those sources of information, one's opinion is received with some respect. But set foot in India, and you are lost. You become a "globe-trotter," and uninformed people at home begin to ask you, with the gravity of a child asking its elders do they know what twice two is, whether you are aware that India contains not one people, but many. We do not know how many times we have seen this recondite piece of learning presented for the confusion of blind Radicals to whom it has appeared that British duties in India do not end with the keeping of wells clean, the planting of trees round the head-waters of rivers, the laying of roads and railways to guard against famine, the dealing out of even justice, and the hundred functions whose efficient discharge renders the subjection of India to this country certainly much more beneficent than any of its previous subjections.—*Manchester Guardian.*

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